DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 427 272 CG 029 093

AUTHOR Guenther, Laurie A.
TITLE Application of Time Out as a Means of Behavior Management for School-Aged Children and Youth.
PUB DATE 1997-07-00
NOTE 97p.; Master's Research Paper, University of Wisconsin, La Crosse.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Masters Theses (042) -- Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Modification; Behavior Problems; Children; Elementary Secondary Education; Special Classes; Special Education; Teacher Guidance; Teachers; *Timeout
IDENTIFIERS *Behavior Management

ABSTRACT

A review of research was undertaken to clarify the use of time out as a behavior management method in the schools. "Time out," the concept of separating children from their peers, is applied in familial, day care, and school settings to manage negative behaviors. Wide variations in the observed application of time out in regular and special education classrooms led to this inquiry. Research was analyzed to determine what circumstances and parameters warranted the application of the time out method. Learning principles, which provide the foundation for the application of the time out procedure, are reviewed along with less aversive behavioral interventions that may used in place of time out. Procedural guidelines are incorporated to provide the reader with an understanding of the need for cautious administration of time out with students in inclusive and special education classrooms. Recommendations for teacher education based on the principles operant learning theory, knowledge of rules and regulations concerning the use of time out, and consideration of the student's individual needs prior to enacting time out procedures in schools are included. (EMK)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

CG

ED 427 272

APPLICATION OF TIME OUT AS A MEANS OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT FOR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN AND YOUTH

A Seminar Paper Presented to

the Graduate Faculty of the

College of Liberal Studies

University of Wisconsin - La Crosse

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Education: Special Education

By

Laurie A. Guenther

July 1997

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

L. GUENTHER

2A

CG029093

Abstract

GUENTHER, L. A., Application of time out as a means of behavior management for school-aged children and youth. Master of Science in Education, Special Education, July 1997, 92 pp. (R. L. Goodhart)

A review of research was undertaken to clarify the use of time out as a behavior management method in the schools. Review of the research was analyzed to determine what circumstances and parameters warranted the application of the time out method. Learning principles which provide the foundation for the application of the time out procedure were discussed, along with less-aversive behavioral interventions which could be used in place of time out. Procedural guidelines were incorporated to provide the reader with an understanding of the need for cautious administration of time out with students in inclusive and special education classrooms. Recommendations were included for teacher education on the principles of operant learning theory, knowledge of rules and regulations concerning the use of time out, and consideration of the student's individual needs prior to enacting time out procedures in the schools.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Need	1
Problem	2
Purpose for Review and Synthesis of Research	3
Definition of Time Out	4
History	5
Use of Time Out with Today's Population	7
Categories of Time Out	9
Explanation of Terms	10
Summary	11
II. REVIEW OF RESEARCH	13
Reducing Negative Behavior with Time Out	13
Time Out in the Regular Education Settings	16
Time Out in Special Education Settings	23
Summary	33
III. SYNTHESIS OF CONCEPTS FROM THE LITERATURE	37
Discussion of Research	37
Patterns in the Literature	41
Alternatives to Time Out	45
Summary	52
IV. APPLICATION OF TIME OUT IN THE SCHOOLS	55
Inclusive Settings	56
Special Education Settings	60
Age and Grade Differentials	64
Summary	66

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS 68

Summary 69
Conclusions 73
Recommendations 79

REFERENCES 87

APPENDIXES 89

(A) Intervention Ladder 90
(B) Time Out Report 92

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Need

The need for this review and synthesis of research grew from an interest in understanding how the concept of separating children from their peers in familial, day care and school settings is applied to manage negative behaviors. This method of behavior management, called "time out," is applied to remove the child from the environment that is believed to be reinforcing the behavior. The implementation of the procedure has been observed by the author in a variety of settings as a consequence for a wide array of behaviors. After observing the application of time out in regular and special education classrooms, the author found the reasons for the administration of the method, as well as the manner in which time out was issued varied greatly among teachers using it as a behavior reduction technique. This apparent disparity in the application of time out, coupled with the number of procedures employed to institute the method, led the researcher to realize that the need existed to collect, analyze and synthesize the research concerning the use of time out in the educational arena.

Upon observing teachers issue time out in a many educational settings, the author investigated teachers' reasons for employing the procedure, and found that not only did the teachers questioned have a limited understanding of the method, but they possessed a disparate list of reasons for using time out to reduce misbehaviors. Since the author of

this work is completing master's degrees in elementary and special education, the need for a better understanding of time out has provided the impetus for this review and synthesis of research.

Problem

Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) explained that time out as a behavior management method should be considered an aversive procedure on the continuum of behavior reduction techniques. Wielkiewicz (1995) further stated that time out could be compared to negative punishment. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) concluded that teachers should employ less aversive behavior management strategies before resorting to time out.

Despite these cautions about employing time out sparingly and viewing time out as an aversive technique, Ruhl's 1985 research (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995) and Zabel's 1986 survey (Yell, 1994) indicated that time out was employed by a majority of those surveyed (88 and 70 percent, respectively). The problem that led to this review and synthesis of the research on time out stemmed from widespread use of time out as noted in the aforementioned studies and the author's own observations of the application of the method for a wide variety of misbehaviors.

If time out has merit as a behavior intervention technique in educational settings, then the author determined that the understanding of the circumstances and parameters for its appropriate use was essential in her own teaching. The problem of comprehending such terms and conditions and effectively applying behavior modification techniques in the use of time out led to the culling of past research on behavior management and time out.

Purpose for Review and Synthesis of Research

The topic of this seminar paper has resulted from the author's interest in understanding how and why time out has been employed as a behavior management technique in the schools. As the research was collected and synthesized it became apparent that the intended audience for this information extended beyond the author to all beginning teachers. Since time out has been used in the educational setting in both regular and special education classrooms (Alberto & Troutman, 1995; Charney, 1991; Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, 1994; Wielkiewicz, 1995), understanding its appropriate and effective use seemed essential for first-year teachers at all grade levels.

Surveys by Ruhl in 1985 (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995) and Zabel in 1986 (Yell, 1994) indicated that time out in special education was used by a majority of those surveyed. The importance of analyzing the effectiveness of appropriate use of time out as a behavior modification method seemed to substantiate the validity of the purpose of this review and synthesis of the research. Although Charney (1991), Rodgers (1992), Smith and Rivera (1993), and Wielkiewicz (1995) did not cite data on the percentage of teachers who used time out in regular education settings, the volume of research provided by these and other authors seemed to indicate that time out has gained wide support among teachers.

Rodgers' 1992 research with undergraduate child development and child care students was directed at assessing the subjects' acceptance of time out as a behavior management technique. The study indicated that the subjects did not have knowledge of the theoretical

principles behind time out, but accepted it as a preferred method. Rodgers concluded that the acceptance of time out was based upon the repertoire of those surveyed, not an understanding of the skills, competencies or principles behind the time out procedure. Such research led the author to consider the need for reviewing and analyzing the literature to provide a basis for using time out only after understanding the principles and parameters for the administration of time out to reduce misbehaviors.

Definition of Time Out

Time out is defined as a behavior management method which is utilized by teachers and researchers with a wide variety of populations, as noted in Veenstra and Scott (1993). In their text, Applied Behavior Analysis for Teachers, (1995) Alberto and Troutman defined time out as a procedure designed to reduce inappropriate behaviors by denying the student access to reinforcement for a fixed period of time. Nelson and Rutherford (1988) classified time out as a behavior reduction procedure, designed to reduce misbehaviors. Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) explained time out as a behavior management method involving contingent withdrawal from positive reinforcement for a set period of time. The authors ranked time out as an aversive procedure on the continuum of behavior-reduction techniques, which also included environmental modification, differential reinforcement, overcorrection, response cost, aversive conditioning and corporal punishment.

Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) defined time out as the removal of students from a situation that is positively reinforcing a behavior and placing them in a "neutral, reinforcement-free environment" (p. 93). The premise that time out was designed as a method of decreasing the frequency of a negative behavior appeared constant throughout

the literature. Wielkiewicz's 1995 interpretation compared time out to negative punishment in its intent to relocate the child to an environment where positive reinforcement is withheld in an effort to reduce the negative behavior.

The Research Question

The review and synthesis of the research was developed to answer the question, "How can time out be used effectively in the schools?" By reviewing the research on the application of time out in our society and the schools and the empirical studies and reasons for controversy cited in the literature, the patterns and trends on the use of time out were studied and analyzed. Computer searches on this topic included Psych-LIT, using the combined keywords "time out and behavior problems" and ERIC, employing the keywords "time out." University of Wisconsin-La Crosse Murphy Library searches of the Eagle System book catalog centered on searching CAT with the keywords "behavior management" and yielded textbooks which supplemented and enhanced the information in the author's own library.

History

From the time the first child was directed to stand in the corner as a consequence for his or her misbehavior and the first prisoner was sentenced to solitary confinement, some form of time out has been present in our society (Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty, 1992). The first documented application of time out as a behavior management method stemmed back to 1963, when B. F. Skinner, a noted behaviorist, researched the effects of time out which he applied to pigeons in his laboratory (Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty). The pigeons

worked in a box, pecking on the keys to receive food. When the light was turned off by Skinner, the pigeon could receive no food. When the light came back on, signaling the end of the time out period, the pigeons were able to peck on the keys and receive food again. Over time the pigeons learned that during the time the light was off (time out), they could not receive reinforcement. Brooks, et al. stated that Skinner's study led researchers to believe that the time out principle could be applied to humans.

Emergence of Time Out in Education

Time out did not gain popularity in educational settings until the 1970s (Smith and Rivera, 1993). Alberto and Troutman (1995) cited a study conducted by Foxx and Shapiro in 1978 in which time out ribbons were given to the students during a group lesson. The students were allowed to wear the ribbons as long as they behaved in what was deemed an appropriate manner. When misbehavior occurred, the ribbon was removed, signaling an end to the teacher's attention toward the student and terminating the student's participation in class activities for three minutes. According to Alberto and Troutman, since the Foxx and Shapiro study, similar time out objects have also been used in a similar way, including badges, leather shoelaces, wristbands and smiley face stickers.

The widespread use of time out in special education classes was noted in Zabel's 1986 study, based upon a survey of 730 instructors of behaviorally disordered students (Yell, 1994). The results indicated that 70 percent of the respondents used time out with their students. Similarly Ruhl's 1985 study, cited in Costenbader and Reading-Brown's 1995 article, indicated that 88 percent of the special education teachers they surveyed used some form of time out. Shapiro and Lentz's 1985 survey (Costenbader & Reading-Brown,

1995) found that 85 percent of school psychologists who were surveyed also employed time out as a behavior reduction technique. Although non of the previously mentioned surveys cited the incidence of the use of any one category of time out, Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) stated that Gast's 1977 study pointed to seclusion time out as the most frequently used form of time out. Rutherford's 1978 research referred to seclusion time out as the most frequently documented type of time out in the literature (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995).

Use of Time Out with Today's Population

Time out has been successful in remediating behaviors of preschool children, elementary students, special education students with mild to severe disabilities and whole school populations, according to Twyman, Johnson, Buie, and Nelson (1994). Charney's 1991 research and Rodgers' 1992 article analyzed the application of time out as a behavior management strategy in the schools. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard's 1994 review of time out concentrated on constructive classroom management and the role of time out. Smith and Rivera's 1993 text also discussed time out's role in the regular education setting as a procedure to reduce non-compliant behaviors. Wielkiewicz's 1995 textbook, Behavior Management in the Schools: Principles and Procedures, explored the effective use of time out in both regular and special education settings. Yell's 1994 analysis addressed the legal issues associated with the application of time out with behaviorally disordered students, while Costenbader and Reading-Brown's 1995 research analyzed the use of time out with a variety of students in special education

Outside the Academic Setting

Outside the arena of public education, Veenstra and Scott's 1993 research reviewed the administration of time out as a method of self-management for people who had a history of perpetuating domestic abuse. The authors outlined different stages of time out which family members who are being treated for domestic abuse can apply to themselves during times when anger management becomes necessary. The levels of time out intervention which the article discussed included taking a mental pause, an informal break, applying an external intervention, using a formal authority intervention, and imposing a prolonged separation. Although the application and use of time out in this instance was markedly different from the teacher-issued time out in education, its purpose was to interrupt a destructive pattern of negative behavior in a similar fashion.

Gerhardt, Holmes, Alessandri, and Goodman (1991) considered the application of time out with people living in residential treatment facilities who were identified as autistic or developmentally disabled. Citing the growing number of special interest and advocacy groups such as the American Association on Mental Retardation which have challenged the employment of time out in residential settings as an aversive procedure that should be stopped or at least reduced, the authors examined the potential side effects associated with aversive interventions, despite their popularity and widespread administration.

Newby, Fischer, and Roman's 1991 study detailed a parent training program that focused on the application of time out as a means of reducing non-compliant behavior in children identified with attention deficit disorders. The emphasis of their research centered on the time out method as an intervention for parents of children diagnosed with attention

deficit disorders who engaged in non-compliant behaviors. The study examined three parent-training programs which the authors viewed as the most direct applications of behavioral methods, the best known and most widely used in clinical settings. All three programs emphasized the administration of time out as a consequence to be applied as an immediate result of negative behaviors which the parents selected for intervention.

Fox, Fox, and Anderson (1991) outlined another parent training program called the STAR program, designed for administration by parents of children aged one to five years, in which time out was issued as a consequence for negative behaviors. The acronyn, STAR, represented the four goals of the program, including (S)- stopping themselves [parents] from reacting emotionally to their child in a negative way, (T)- thinking about how they [parents] are feeling to regain control of negative feelings, (A)- asking themselves whether their expectations of their children are reasonable, and (R)- responding to the children in an effective manner, employing methods such as time out as consistent, predictable consequences for negative behavior.

Categories of Time Out

There are different forms or categories of time out as a behavior reduction technique, ranging from those considered to be mildly aversive to severely restrictive. Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) outlined three major types of time out: nonseclusion, exclusion, and seclusion. Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) described four forms of time out, including planned ignoring, contingent observation, exclusion time out, and isolation or seclusion time out. Skiba and Raison (1990) identified six categories of time out, citing

Rutherford and Nelson's 1982 research. The least aversive of the six forms of time out was planned ignoring, following by planned ignoring plus restraint, contingent observation, reduction of response maintenance in time out, exclusion time out, and seclusion time out. Since the preponderance of the literature cited no more than four categories of time out (Brooks, Perry, & Hingerty, 1992: Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995; Smith & Rivera, 1993), those four will be outlined here:

1. Planned ignoring is a form of non-exciusion time out and involves withholding social reinforcement from a student by deliberately ignoring his or her negative inappropriate behavior.(Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995)

2. Contingent observation is classified as a type of exclusion time out and is considered to be more aversive than planned ignoring. In contingent observation, the disruptive student is removed from the group activity and allowed to observe the activity or lesson, but not participate in it.(Smith & Rivera, 1993)

3. Exclusion time out is considered more restrictive or aversive than contingent observation. Yell (1994) stated that the student being excluded remained in what the author referred to as the time-in or teaching environment, but faced away from the other students and the focus of the lesson or activity. Smith and Rivera's 1993 definition of exclusion time out required the student to leave the classroom to sit in another classroom or a school administrator's office. Either condition outlined by the two authors has the same effect; to turn the student's attention from the environment that is believed to be reinforcing the misbehavior.

4. Seclusion or isolation time out occurs when a student goes into an area or room designed as a time out room after being directed by a teacher or staff member, following the occurrence of a negative behavior.(Smith & Rivera, 1993; Yell, 1994)

Explanation of Terms

Aversive Conditioning- Use of a stimulus that decreases the rate or probability of a behavior when presented as a consequence of a behavior, acting as a punisher.

Behavioral Disorder- An established pattern which may include severely aggressive, compulsive, withdrawn or anxious behaviors; general pervasive unhappiness, depression or wide mood swings; or severely disordered thought processes or distorted interpersonal relationships.

Corporal Punishment- Physical punishment of children by hitting with one's hand or an object.

Differential Reinforcement- A technique designed to reduce misbehavior that emphasizes alternative behaviors to replace inappropriate or negative ones.

Extinction- Withholding reinforcement for a previously reinforced behavior to reduce the occurrence of that behavior.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)- A document that specifies a handicapped child's present level of performance, the goals and objectives the child needs to attempt for the period covered in the IEP, and the percent of time the child will receive special education services.

Intervention- A pre-planned procedure designed to reduce or extinguish a target behavior.

Overcorrection- A behavior management method issued as a consequence for a negative behavior, in which the student takes responsibility for his or her behavior by making restitution or practicing the appropriate behavior.

Punishment- The application of an aversive consequence contingent upon a negative behavior.

Reinforcer- A stimulus delivered as a consequence for a behavior that increases or maintains the probability of the future occurrence of that behavior.

Target Behavior- A behavior which is selected for intervention. Such behavior must be observable, measurable and well-defined.

Summary

In summary, time out has gained acceptance in a variety of environments as a popular behavior management method. Although the formal documentation of its use has spanned less than 40 years, time out has become a commonly applied technique in managing the behaviors of school-aged children and youth in inclusive and special education classrooms. The procedure has been subjected to numerous interpretations of how it should be employed, under what circumstances its use is warranted, and what

behavioral principles the administrator of the method needs to know before instituting time out as a behavioral intervention.

The review of the research revealed that time out has been applied extensively in special education, with students identified as behaviorally disordered. Regular education teachers have also found that time out can be effective in reducing negative behaviors which may disrupt the classroom environment. The review of literature found in Chapter II will provide documentation of past research on time out in regular and special education, as well as legal and ethical questions which have been raised as a result of the current trend.

Chapter III will synthesize the review of research and discuss alternative methods of behavior management. Chapter IV will examine the application of time out in inclusive and special education settings and at different age and grade levels to provide the reader with interpretations of when and how time out can be employed to effectively reduce negative behaviors. Chapter V will summarize the research information, draw conclusions based upon that information and make recommendations for the future.

CHAPTER II

Review of Research

Reducing Negative Behavior with Time Out

Time out is a behavior reduction technique that can be difficult to implement properly, according to research by Abramowitz and O'Leary (1991). Twyman, Johnson, Buie, and Nelson (1994) stated that research has indicated time out can be effective in reducing negative behaviors such as physical or verbal aggression, tantrums and non-compliant behaviors. Skiba and Raison (1990) cited a 1975 study by Forehand and MacDonough, which concluded that time out can produce long-lasting and immediate suppression of negative behavior.

The time out procedure has demonstrated effectiveness with a variety of populations and behaviors (Skiba & Raison, 1990), but the authors warn that its use may be contrary to the goals and objectives of education, by removing the student from his or her opportunity to learn. Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) also cautioned that despite its potential effectiveness as a behavior reduction method, time out can reduce the amount of time the individual spends in the learning environment. Similarly, Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) stated that time out fails to teach more appropriate behaviors and removes the student from the environment where academic and behavioral learning can take place.

In Durand and Carr's 1992 study, the success of time out as a behavior management technique appeared to involve the loss of adult attention as a consequence for negative behaviors. The authors hypothesized that the time out procedure may be more successful

than similar techniques, such as extinction, because the termination of adult attention is usually paired with a salient stimulus, such as the removal of the child or turning away by the adult. This saliency may also account for the lack of generalization that is often observed with the use of time out, since the absence of adult attention signals to the child that the procedure is in place, while the return of the attention indicates that time out is no longer in effect.

Time Out from Positive Reinforcement

Alberto and Troutman's 1995 text defines the term time out as a shortened form of "time-out from positive reinforcement" (p. 318). The authors stated that before applying time out to reduce misbehaviors, the teacher needs to be sure that the student has access to reinforcing consequences for appropriate behaviors in the learning environment.

Skiba and Raison (1990) referred to the environment from which the student is being removed as the time-in environment and cautioned that there is a potential for time out to serve as an escape from the academic setting. The authors stated that the escape reaction may be the most undesirable side effect of the procedure, serving as a reinforcer for the negative behavior. Brooks, Perry and Hingerty (1992) also noted that a disadvantage of time out as a behavior management technique is that some individuals consider being in the time out environment a positive reinforcement for their behavior.

In their 1991 overview of the standards and policy on the use of time out, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDE) stated that when there is no reduction in the misbehavior following time out, teachers need to examine the time-in environment to determine if is enriched with a consistent reinforcement procedure

for positive behavior. Rhode, Jenson and Reavis (1995) similarly found that one of the first steps in enhancing the effectiveness of time out procedures is to be sure that the reinforcement rate for appropriate behavior in the learning environment is high.

In Brooks, Perry and Hingerty's 1992 article, the authors cited Marr and Roessler's 1986 study which concluded that time out could be effective only if the original situation from which the person was removed was reinforcing to that individual. Similarly Wielkiewicz (1995) stated that in order for time out to succeed in reducing a behavior, there must be a large difference between the schedules of reinforcement in the time out and time-in environments. Wielkiewicz also concluded that when the child is working on a task that is difficult or frustrating, if he or she feels bored in the time-in environment, or if the student receives social reinforcement from peers during the time out period, the time out procedure can actually reinforce the negative behavior.

Issuing the Precision Request

Abramowitz and O'Leary (1991) stated that when time out has been selected as the appropriate behavior reduction method, the directive that initiates the time out period must be issued contingent on each instance of the negative behavior that has been targeted. Rhode, Jenson and Reavis (1995) found that teachers need to combine the time out directive with a precision request sentence to improve the overall effectiveness of the procedure. Brooks, Perry and Hingerty's 1992 study emphasized the importance of immediately and concisely issuing the time out request. The authors cited Clark's 1989 research which suggested the use of the 10-10 rule. Clark stated that the negative behavior

should be confronted within ten seconds of its occurrence with no more than ten words. Alberto and Troutman (1995) explained the need for concise wording in issuing the time out directive and advised teachers to avoid engaging in any discussion with the student if he or she begins to argue or make excuses for the misbehavior resulting in the consequence.

Several authors emphasized the importance of verbally identifying the negative behavior the student demonstrated directly before issuing the time out request. Rodgers' 1992 study categorized this technique as time out with rationale. Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis (1995) stated that the entire time out procedure should be explained to the student before it is implemented. The authors explained that when the misbehavior occurs, the teacher should re-identify it for the student calmly, issuing a precision request such as, "That is fighting; you need to go to the time out room," (p. 74). Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) also stressed that the teacher must state the specific inappropriate behavior that has occurred before beginning the time out period. This pairing of the identification of the negative behavior with the directive to begin the time out period can enhance the effectiveness of the time out procedure (Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis, 1995).

Time Out in the Regular Education Setting

Time out has been used in classroom as an intervention for behaviors which teachers consider disruptive to the environment. Charney's 1991 research examined the administration of time out in the inclusive setting as a means of establishing order and maintaining rules. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) discussed the application of time out as part of a system of constructive classroom management methods. In their text, Smith and Rivera (1993) outlined a progressive system of behavioral interventions, and

included time out as one of the most restrictive measures that a teacher can employ. The authors provided suggestions for applying less aversive behavior management methods to reduce negative behavior before instituting the time out procedure.

Charney's Model

In her book, Teaching Children to Care: Management in the Responsive Classroom, Charney defined time out as a part of a system of logical consequences in which teachers give children time to regain self-control. Charney's philosophy in employing time out differed from Alberto and Troutman's behavioral definition of time out as "time out from positive reinforcement" (p.318); instead, Charney's explanation of time out in the elementary setting was identified as the method of choice for teachers to enforce such misbehaviors as forgetting the rules, testing boundaries, and exploring limits.

In Charney's text she suggested introducing time out to the class during the first week of school, as part of the process of establishing rules and consequences for breaking the rules. The suggestions that Charney outlined in her textbook for implementing an effective time out program in the classroom were based upon her experiences and knowledge of its use in a kindergarten through sixth grade elementary setting.

According to Charney's model, time out should be used in a consistent and predictable manner in the classroom. This includes keeping a specially-designated time out chair in a visible place in the room, away from the door and areas of learning. Charney stated that the manner in which the student is released from time out needs to be consistent. With children aged five and six years old, Charney suggested that the teacher direct the child to rejoin the class at the end of the time out period, pairing the request with the expectation of appropriate behavior upon the student's return. With students who are seven or eight years old, a nod or hand gesture was suggested for

release, with confirmation that the student is ready to return to class. Students aged nine through twelve, said Charney, can share in managing their own release by being directed to return when they know they are ready to follow the rules and engage in the expected, appropriate behavior.

Charney's explanation of behaviors which warrant time out differed from Alberto and Troutman's (1995). According to Charney, time out should be applied to minor disturbances, rather than waiting for the misbehavior to escalate and interfere with other students' learning. Charney's reasons for this belief indicated that applying time out when the misbehavior is first demonstrated prevents children from letting their behaviors get out of control and cause disruptions in the classroom. Conversely, Alberto and Troutman stated that time out should be reserved for behaviors such as physical or verbal aggression or the destruction of property.

Maintaining Order and Enforcing Rules

According to Charney's model, time out can be applied as a consequence for minor infractions. The procedure can safeguard school and classroom rules, along with the work of the other students. By instituting the procedure when a student interrupts another classmate or engages in activities that could be distracting to others during class time, Charney concluded that the removal of the student can preserve the integrity of the rules while protecting the other students' right to learn.

Charney further stated that time out should be issued as a direction, not a negotiation. This direct and non-negotiable approach to the method compares to Alberto and

Troutman's 1995 conclusion that it is important that the teacher not engage in any discussion or negotiation when directing the student to time out. The administration of time out need to emphasize a choice the student has made. Charney concluded that when the teacher issues the time out directive, he or she is implying a choice that the student has already made. Charney exemplified the choices as exhibiting appropriate behavior or choosing time out.

Despite Charney's conclusion that time out is a necessary component in classroom discipline, she stated that time out does not work for all children. Charney further advised that teachers may need to seek other strategies to employ with students who seem determined to violate rules and defy the teacher's authority. Charney also stated that children whose behavior seems to be a result of feeling excluded from the group should receive consequences other than time out, which address individual needs without reinforcing the negative behavior.

Managing Surface Behaviors

In their text, Constructive Classroom Management Strategies for Creating Positive Learning Environments, Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) discussed the application of time out as a procedure to be implemented only when surface management strategies have failed. The authors defined surface behaviors as those that are minor infractions that can usually be controlled by planned ignoring, signal interference, proximity control, humor to defuse tension, support from routine, value appealing, and removing distracting objects.

Planned ignoring was discussed in Chapter I of this paper as the least aversive category of time out (Brooks, Perry, & Hingerty, 1992; Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995;

Smith & Rivera, 1993). Planned ignoring was defined as withholding social reinforcement from a student by deliberately and systematically ignoring inappropriate behavior. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) provided the following definitions for other strategies to reduce surface behaviors, prior to instituting time out as a behavior management technique:

1. Signal interference is the use of a non-verbal cue or prompt, determined in advance by the teacher and student, which the teacher demonstrates to the student upon the occurrence of the surface behavior.

2. Proximity control is the reduction of physical space between a teacher and student instituted by the teacher in an attempt to reduce the negative behavior.

3. Using humor to defuse tension includes the proactive use of appropriate humor to counter the demonstration of an inappropriate behavior.

4. Support from routine includes providing students with a consistent routine for them to follow, along with advance organizers, which provide students with additional information about upcoming activities during the day.

5. Value appealing is a technique in which the teacher requests that a student stop engaging in a negative behavior and begin to behave appropriately, reminding the student of the correct behavior that is expected.

6. Removing distracting objects includes moving objects before instructional time begins to avoid their interference with learning activities. (Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, pp. 161-165)

Degrees of Time Out

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard stated that before employing the most aversive form of time out, seclusion, teachers need to maintain an organized and predictable classroom and employ surface management strategies whenever possible. The authors cited the research of Smith, Finn, and Dowdy (1993) who identified four forms of progressively more restrictive time out to be used in the classroom, including:

1. Time out at the desk, which is a form of exclusion time out, requiring the student to

sit at his or her desk during the time out period and not participate in class activities. Smith, Finn, and Dowdy suggested that when the student begins to engage in appropriate behavior, the teacher needs to reinforce it with praise.

2. In-class time out involves removing the student to a separate area in the classroom, following the occurrence of the target behavior. The authors suggested that the teacher use his or her own discretion in determining if the student should observe class activities while in time out or turn away from the focus of the class.

3. Out-of-class time out can be used when the teacher cannot control the reinforcement the student is receiving in the environment. In that case, the student is removed from the classroom and taken to another room. This form of exclusion time out is categorized by the authors as more aversive, since it limits the student's ability to engage in learning in the classroom.

4. Time out rooms, used for seclusion time out periods, are viewed as aversive settings by the authors. Teachers need to be aware of state and local guidelines for using this form of time out, including the amount of time the student can spend in seclusion. (Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, pp. 169-171)

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard also cited Gast and Nelson's 1977 guidelines for the use of time out in school settings. Gast and Nelson suggested that teachers should begin with the least aversive forms of time out possible, clearly document the procedures, duration and effectiveness of each instance of time out, and develop written procedures on how the time out procedure should be employed.

The Continuum of Intervention Methods

In their book, Effective Discipline, Smith and Rivera (1993) graphically illustrated the continuum of alternative behavior management procedures available to teachers with an Intervention Ladder (see Appendix A). The lower steps of the ladder were labeled with techniques which the authors considered the least aversive measures and progress to more restrictive methods on each ascending step of the ladder. The authors' assessment of the various stages of intervention methods included the conclusion that time out should be ranked as a relatively aversive behavior reduction technique.

The three categories of time out that Smith and Rivera recognized included contingent observation, exclusion, and seclusion time out. Contingent observation is the least restrictive of the three forms, since the disruptive student is removed from the group activity, but allowed to observe. This behavior management method allows the student to receive instruction time by watching and listening as his or her peers model appropriate social and academic behaviors (Smith & Rivera, 1993).

Smith and Rivera's description of exclusion time out entailed excusing the student from class following a disruption. Abramowitz and O'Leary (1991) stated that exclusion time out would be most effective in reducing behaviors that are maintained by attention and in situations where removing the student results in the loss of positive reinforcement. Smith and Rivera cautioned that seclusion time out should be reserved for students who exhibit "severe, out-of-control behavior" (p.137). Similarly Alberto and Troutman (1995) explained the use of seclusion time out as removing the student to an isolation room contingent on a misbehavior and denying positive reinforcers from the teacher, peers or the classroom itself. Alberto and Troutman cited Zabel's 1986 study, which stated that this form of time out was usually reserved to reduce misbehaviors such as physical or verbal aggression or destruction of property.

Distinguishing Time Out from Punishment

Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) defined time out as the removal of an individual from a setting which is reinforcing the behavior to a "neutral, reinforcement-free environment" (p. 93). This explanation of time out distinguishes the method from punishment, which implies the administration of an aversive consequence following the demonstration of the negative behavior. The neutral application of the time out method allows the enforcer to withhold reinforcement to reduce the occurrence of the behavior without employing aversive tactics (Alberto & Troutman, 1995).

Application of punishment

Punishment was identified by Smith and Rivera as the application of an aversive consequence after a negative behavior. They advised that teachers avoid using punishment in school settings. Smith and Rivera cited Heron's 1978 study and Smith, Polloway, and West's (1979) research, which concluded that punishment caused a quick suppression of the target behavior, while demonstrating the teacher's control. Smith and Rivera further cited the works of Axelrod and Apsche in 1983, and Dreikurs and Grey in 1970, which stated that punishment's effects were to teach the person what not to do, but failed to teach the correct behavior.

The possible side effects of punishment were discussed by Smith and Rivera, who suggested that teachers consider the disadvantages before proceeding with the tactic:

1. Students often associate the punishment with the one who institutes it.

2. Punishment may alter the student-teacher relationship, resulting in the student's avoidance of the teacher, the situation or the school setting.

3. Punishment does not tend to generalize, so it may have to be used in each setting in which the negative behavior is demonstrated in order to be effective in reducing the behavior.

4. Punishment does not teach appropriate replacement behaviors. It may reduce or eliminate the negative behavior, but does not teach positive alternative behaviors. (Smith & Rivera, pp. 143-144)

Time Out in Special Education Settings

As Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) stated, the time out procedure, especially isolation time out, has been shown to be effective with children in many special education settings, including residential schools, psychiatric facilities, day treatment centers and in public schools. Gast and Nelson (1977), as cited by Costenbader and

Reading-Brown, found that isolation was the most frequently employed form of time out in these settings. Similarly Costenbader and Reading-Brown referenced Zabel's 1986 study which indicated that teachers in self-contained special education classrooms reported a higher frequency of time out than did teachers in resource rooms. The respondents to Zabel's study reported that they applied time out approximately five times per week, usually as a result of verbal and physical aggression. About half of those surveyed kept a record of each instance of time out, while less than 25 percent reported that their local education associations had written guidelines for administering the time out procedure.

Costenbader and Reading-Brown's 1995 study investigated the use of isolation time out as an intervention to control behavior in a special education facility. The subjects were 156 students identified as emotionally disturbed. Over the course of the academic year 13,000 separate time out episodes occurred. The students educated in the facility, according to the authors, represented the most severely emotionally disturbed/behaviorally disordered in a six-county geographic area, reflecting an extremely challenging behavior management population.

In contrast to Zabel's survey findings, Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) found that talking was the behavior which most often resulted in the employment of the time out procedure in the special education facility in the study. Very few incidents of physical aggression were reported by the authors. Examination of the linear data did not indicate an increase or decrease in the application of time out over the school year.

The findings of Costenbader and Reading-Brown's research appeared consistent with those from Skiba and Raison (1990), who sampled 88 second to sixth-grade students labeled emotionally/behaviorally disordered. The Skiba and Raison research was performed in self-contained special education classrooms within a school district, unlike the six-county area that Costenbader and Reading-Brown's study observed. Skiba and

Raison reported separately on out-of-class (exclusion) and isolation time out procedures, both of which were served in time out rooms. Combining the two categories that Skiba and Raison observed, their research reported an average of 76.16 incidents of time out over the academic school year. Of the 88 subjects in the study, 43 percent spent at least one hour per day in the regular classroom, indicating that they may have had less severe behavioral disorders than the subjects in Costenbader and Reading-Brown's study. Weighing the time these students spent outside the special education setting resulted in nearly identical results for both studies for the mean number of time out incidents (76.16 vs. 74.39).

In Wielkiewicz's text, Behavior Management in the Schools: Principles and Procedures, the author stressed two important points teachers need to consider before administering time out. First, when used properly, time out can be effective in reducing unwanted behaviors. Second, the time out procedure needs to be taken seriously by the teacher. Such care must include monitoring the method to see if it is having the intended effects, considering how much time the student loses from academic instruction while in time out, and addressing any problems that arise promptly (Wielkiewicz, 1995).

Cautions and Caveats on the Application of Time Out

In Wielkiewicz's text (1995) the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders is cited from their 1990 position paper on the use of behavior management techniques with children identified as behaviorally disordered. The Council summarized their guidelines as follows:

1. Before employing behavior management procedures, schools must obtain permission from parents or guardians and a human rights committee.

2. The potential target behaviors must be analyzed before instituting intervention techniques, beginning with collecting baseline data on the frequency of the behavior.

3. Less restrictive interventions should be tried before behavior management procedures are instituted.

4. State and district guidelines concerning the application of such procedures should be followed.

5. The child's individualized education program (IEP) should include a detailed written program description before behavior management methods are enacted.

6. Selection of a technique to reduce the misbehavior should be based upon empirical findings, and the least restrictive method should be employed.

7. Teachers and other staff members who would employ the behavior management methods should be thoroughly trained to carry out the procedures.

8. Data should be collected and analyzed while the behavior intervention program is in effect, and the child's parents and other professionals should be advised of the child's progress or the need for changes in the IEP.(Wielkiewicz, p. 125)

Wielkiewicz stated that a successful time out program depends largely upon the teacher's understanding of several key principles. The first premise is that time out should be reserved for serious behaviors which interfere with learning or safety. In Wielkiewicz's opinion, physical aggression is the only behavior which fits this principle and might warrant the use of time out. Wielkiewicz further stated by collecting data on when and under what conditions the target behavior occurs, the teacher may be able to avoid the time out procedure completely. He further stated that when the definition of the problem behavior is reviewed, it may be possible to consider other interventions.

Assessing the baseline rate or frequency with which the behavior occurs and comparing it to the frequency after the application of time out can help the teacher determine if the time out procedure is working or if other methods should be tried instead. Wielkiewicz stressed the importance of obtaining ongoing data to determine the efficacy of the intervention and suggested that providing adequate reinforcers when the student is not in the time out environment can be a key consideration in its effective use. Wielkiewicz

concluded that when the time out setting is lacking in reinforcers and is markedly different from the place from which the student was removed, there is a greater chance that the intervention will succeed in reducing the unwanted behavior.

Wielkiewicz suggested issuing one or two minutes of time out for each year of the student's age. He stated that establishing a minimum length of time is the first criterion for release from time out, while the second is making sure the student is calm when released. Extension of the time out period may be necessary, but Wielkiewicz cautioned that if the time out extends for more than one hour, the time out period should be ended. When such lengthy periods do not result in the student's regaining his or her self-control, those individuals who were part of the IEP team that instituted the time out procedure should ideally be consulted before continuing the intervention program.

Addressing Safety Issues

In their text, Alberto and Troutman (1995) also suggested that the time out period should last from one to five minutes, citing Gast and Nelson's 1977 research which recommended that the duration of the time out procedure should be brief. Alberto and Troutman also listed safety and comfort features that should be included in all isolation rooms, including a) that the isolation room be at least six feet by six feet, b) that the room be well-lit, c) that proper ventilation be provided in the time out room, d) that the room be free of objects and fixtures with which students could harm themselves, e) that the room be monitored by the teaching staff, both visually and auditorily, at all times that the student is inside, and f) that the time out room remain unlocked (Alberto & Troutman, pp. 321-322).

In their 1991 report, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDE) agreed that monitoring the time out room is essential. Citing Mehfoud and Rosenfeld's 1991 study, the directors stated that supervision of the room should always be

provided. Advising that the employment of time out as a behavior management procedure should be agreed to by the student's parents and outlined in the student's individualized education program, (IEP), the authors of the NASDE report cautioned that "time out rooms are not an educational program" (p.11). The report further stated that if the student is spending more time in the time out room than the educational setting, the special education program in effect is no longer appropriate and requires modification. The directors also stated that careful monitoring of the effectiveness of time out by ongoing data collection of the frequency of the target behavior is essential to determine if the method is effective in reducing the negative behavior.

Legal Ramifications on the Use of Time Out

Yell's 1994 research indicated that the administration of behavior management techniques such as time out with students identified as behaviorally disordered has become a source of debate. Yell stated that the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a federal mandate which was instituted in 1990 and re-authorized in 1995, does not provide for guidelines for methods designed to reduce misbehaviors. The lack of federal guidelines has resulted in a body of law known as case law, in which courts interpret existing laws. The suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities have been the source of litigation, as has time out. Yell stated that although time out is legally permissible, it is important that teachers understand the legal considerations of the procedure.

The primary decision that teachers need to make when instituting time out is whether the student should be removed from the environment where the reinforcers are present or whether the reinforcers should be removed (Yell, 1994). Planned ignoring or the removal of reinforcing objects are examples of the employment of non-exclusionary time out. Those time out procedures which remove the student from the time-in environment are

referred to as exclusionary, according to Yell's definition. Yell considered isolation or seclusion time out to be the most restrictive and intrusive form of time out, the most abused, and the forms of time out that have been considered most often by the courts when not administered appropriately.

Four federal court cases have addressed the application of time out with students identified as behaviorally disordered. All these cases were brought by parents against teachers, principals and school districts that used isolation/seclusion time out. The litigation demonstrated that when time out is issued inappropriately it can result in the deprivation of a student's constitutional and educational rights and the potential for legal challenges. A court case in Kansas, Hayes v. Unified School District (1989), found that all discipline of a child in a classroom falls within the scope of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Yell, 1994).

In the text, Better IEPs, Bateman discussed the IDEA Regulations, 34CFR300.500-553, in which the concept of least restrictive environment was addressed (LRE). The law identified the use of LRE as essential in educating handicapped students to the maximum extent appropriate with their non-handicapped peers. The IDEA Regulations addressed the obligation the school district has in making available a full continuum of alternative placements for students identified as handicapped, including those who are emotionally disturbed or behaviorally disordered, and to consider any harmful effect such placement may have on the child or the quality of services that he or she needs.

Yell's Guidelines

Yell developed guidelines for teachers to consider before using the time out procedure, which he based on the extrapolation of the cases he reviewed that resulted from challenges to the application of the time out procedure with special education students. In addition to

his suggestion that teachers who employ time out understand the principles underlying the procedure and how to apply it, Yell stated that it is important that teachers are aware of local or state policies regarding time out. As Wielkiewicz's 1995 research similarly stated, prior to implementing exclusion or isolation time out, teachers must know and understand state and local guidelines concerning time out.

Yell's guidelines also stressed that teachers must have written procedures on the use of time out and inform parents and students about the conditions under which time out will be employed. These procedures should also include the rationale for the application of time out, the rules during time out, the length of time out and how release from time out will occur. Yell noted that it is important to obtain permission prior to instituting time out. This written consent is essential in ensuring that the parents understand the procedures, the conditions under which the time out will be administered and what changes in behavior are expected with the intervention method. Yell did state, however, that when parents refuse to give permission for time out [or any technique instituted to reduce misbehaviors], and the school personnel believe it necessary to protect the safety of students or school staff could be used, time out can be applied, pending the reversal of the procedure following a due process hearing.

The Individualized Education Program

Yell stated that the people who provide input on the student's individualized educational program (IEP) team should be involved in making decisions about time out or any behavior management method in the student's program. Behavior intervention plans that outline target behaviors and their consequences, as well as the procedures to be

applied to reduce those misbehaviors should be included in the student's IEP, according to Yell. In addition to outlining the behavior reduction plan on the IEP, Yell further stated that if time out is chosen as a behavioral intervention, it must serve a legitimate educational function. Such legitimate purposes include reducing dangerous or disruptive behavior while teaching appropriate behavior and protecting the educational environment from disruption.

Similarly the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (1995) stated that the time out procedure must serve a legitimate educational function and relate to the goals and objectives stated in the student's IEP. Yell further stated that time out should be used in accordance with the principle of hierarchical application, which states that more intrusive procedures such as exclusion and isolation time out should only be administered when less intrusive methods have failed. While enacting procedures such as time out to reduce negative behaviors, Yell concluded that teachers should simultaneously identify an appropriate behavior to replace the misbehavior, and institute an intervention to increase the desired behavior.

Administration and Data Collection

Yell advised that time out must be issued and applied in a reasonable manner. The time out directive should not be issued in anger or in a harsh or severe manner, and should be proportionate to the negative behavior and the age and physical condition of the student demonstrating the behavior. Yell further suggested that when a student engages in the target behavior, a single warning that states the rule being broken and the consequence

being considered should be stated before initiating the time out directive. Employing this method of pairing the warning with the consequence which would result from the demonstration of the misbehavior can increase the effectiveness of the time out procedure and give the student an opportunity to choose an appropriate behavior.

Following the time out period, the teacher should explain to the student why the procedure was enacted and discuss the expected behavior to avoid time out in the future. Yell suggested that time out periods be five to ten minutes with younger students and twenty minutes with older students. The author also listed specifications for the isolation room, similar to those set forth by Alberto and Troutman (1995), addressing the minimum size, the need for adequate lighting and ventilation, and keeping the area clear of any potential safety hazards.

Yell stated that when using time out, it is important to keep thorough records. The author suggested that the teacher keep a time out log which includes the student's name, the date and time, the behavior that led to the intervention, the specific procedure utilized, the length of time the student was in the time out room, the results of the procedure, and the names of any witnesses present (see Appendix B). Similarly the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (1995) stressed the need for a time out log to record the instance of each application of time out immediately after its enactment. Yell indicated that when teachers employ exclusion or isolation/seclusion time out, the parents of the child should be notified.

Yell stressed that the reason for recording data on the frequency of the procedure and the results of each application of time out can help determine if the procedure is effective

or should be modified or replaced. Not only does the data collected serve as a gauge for the effectiveness of the time out procedure, Yell concluded, it also provides documentation for supervisors and parents who may hold the teacher accountable for any behavior reduction methods in place.

Summary

The first documented use of time out as a behavior management method was documented when B.F. Skinner used time out with pigeons in his research laboratory in 1963 (Brooks, Perry, & Hingerty, 1992). Since the success of Skinner's application of the procedure time out gained popularity with teachers in the 1970s in educational settings (Smith & Rivera, 1993). A review of the literature revealed that in the 1980s time out became a preferred behavior management method among special education teachers. Both Zabel's 1986 survey, which was cited in Yell's 1994 research, and Ruhl's 1985 survey (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995) indicated that a majority of the teachers surveyed administered time out with their behaviorally disordered students.

The literature also indicated that time out is applied in many different environments in and out of the educational arena. Twyman, Johnson, Buie, and Nelson (1994) stated the method is utilized in preschool, elementary classrooms, and special education rooms. Yell (1994) and Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) researched the application of time out in special education with students identified as behaviorally disordered. Gerhardt, Holmes, Alessandri, and Goodman (1991) analyzed the employment of time out with people who have autistic and developmental disabilities in residential facilities. Fox, Fox,

and Anderson's 1991 work examined parental administration of time out with preschool children, while Newby, Fischer, and Roman (1991) researched the application of the method by parents of children with attention deficit disorders.

The review of the research identified different forms of time out with varying degrees of restriction. Several authors considered planned ignoring the least aversive of the forms of time out (Brooks, Perry, & Hingerty, 1992; Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995; Smith & Rivera, 1993). Contingent observation was considered slightly more restrictive by Smith and Rivera, while still allowing the student the opportunity to remain in the learning environment. Wielkiewicz (1995) defined exclusion time out as the next step in the continuum of time out procedures. Exclusion was defined by the Wielkiewicz as the exclusion of the student from the other students in the classroom setting. In this situation the student has lost access to instructional activity for the time out period. Seclusion or isolation time out was identified by Yell (1994) and Smith and Rivera (1993) as the most restrictive form of time out and the most subject to abuse and litigation.

Skiba and Raison's 1990 research noted that time out can be effective in reducing negative behaviors. The behaviors which warrant the use of time out varied widely. Charney's 1991 text concluded that time out should be employed for minor behavioral offenses as a part of a larger system of enforcing school and classroom rules, citing examples of preventing escalation of behaviors that might disrupt the educational environment and potentially interfere with other students' learning.

Conversely, Alberto and Troutman (1995), Smith and Rivera (1993) and Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) agreed that the time out procedure should be reserved

only for severe, out-of-control behaviors such as physical aggression. These authors also concluded that teachers need to employ less aversive or restrictive behavior management techniques before administering time out.

In addition to the disparity among the researchers concerning what behaviors justify issuing the time out directive, the review of literature also identified conflicting examples monitoring the effectiveness of the procedure. Alberto and Troutman's 1995 research, Wielkiewicz (1995) and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (1991) concluded that if time out is to be used as a behavior management method, the teacher must first record baseline data on the target behavior and collect ongoing data to determine if the time out technique is succeeding at reducing the misbehavior. Charney (1991) and Epanchin, Stoddard, and Townsend's 1994 research do not indicate that data collection needs to be performed. Instead the authors of both texts discuss anecdotal monitoring of the method but fall short of recommending scientific analysis.

Charney described the application of time out in the regular education setting was as the method of choice for enforcing rules and responding to students' attempts to test boundaries and explore limits. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard's work discussed the employment of what they termed surface management strategies to reduce misbehavior. The researchers viewed the use of signal interference, proximity control, humor, and the removal of distracting objects from the learning environment as prerequisite techniques to assist the teacher in managing misbehaviors before the application of the time out procedure becomes necessary.

There is clearly a large body of disparate interpretation in the literature on the topic of time out. Rodgers' 1992 research suggested that the subjects in his survey accepted time out as a behavior management technique without having the knowledge of theoretical principles underlying the method. Rodgers concluded that the subjects' acceptance of time out was based upon their own repertoires, not the understanding of principles of learning.

CHAPTER III

Synthesis of Concepts from the Literature

Discussion of Research

The work of Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) provided a quantitative study on their research with time out in an institutional setting with students identified as severely behaviorally disordered. The authors also compared their research with previous surveys by Ruhl in 1985 and Zabel in 1986.

Costenbader and Reading-Brown are professors of school psychology at Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York, and received grant funding from the institute to conduct their research. The authors cited previous research which provided principles and definitions in behavior reduction techniques to assist in understanding their study. In their article, Costenbader and Reading-Brown outlined many precautions which they suggested teachers should consider before employing time out as an intervention for negative behaviors.

Unlike Zabel's 1986 study, which concluded that time out was most often administered as a consequence for violent behaviors, Costenbader and Reading-Brown's 1995 research indicated that talking was the behavior most often targeted for the time out procedure. Very few instances of aggressive behavior were reported in the data the authors collected. The researchers recommended that future studies might investigate the relationship of teacher variables, including age and level of training, with the application of the method.

Wielkiewicz's Research

Wielkiewicz is an associate professor of psychology at the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota. His 1995 text, Behavior Management in the Schools: Principles and Procedures, is in its second printing. Dr. Wielkiewicz worked as a school psychologist and a consultant to regular and special education before joining the staff at the College of Saint Benedict. He has also written a book on the rehabilitation of people with developmental disabilities.

Wielkiewicz's text is a detailed, comprehensive guide to appropriate behavior management in the public schools. Its technical format requires that the reader has knowledge of the psychology of education and the basic tenets of behavior management. Wielkiewicz provided a foundation for understanding time out as a behavior reduction technique, and gave the reader substantive reasons for learning the principles that guide the effective employment of the time out method.

Wielkiewicz outlined the different conditions which may warrant the application of time out in both inclusive and special education classes and divided the text into separate chapters, based upon the setting where the behavior management techniques would be applied. Wielkiewicz compared time out to negative punishment in its attempt to withhold reinforcers, suggesting that teachers need to monitor the method to see if it is having the intended effects, and consider how much time the student is losing from academic instruction while in time out.

Wielkiewicz cited the guidelines from the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders' 1990 position paper on the use of time out. He further suggested that if a time

out program can succeed in reducing negative behavior, the teacher administering the procedure must understand the behavioral principles that provide the foundation for the technique. After gaining this knowledge, Wielkiewicz stated that teachers need to employ time out cautiously and continue to collect ongoing data to determine if the method is effective or needs to be modified or discontinued.

Mitchell Yell's Research

Yell is a professor of special education at the University of South Carolina in Columbia, South Carolina, focusing on the legal issues surrounding behavior management of students identified as behaviorally disordered. The author has also researched and published information on the application of corporal punishment with special education students.

Yell (1995) analyzed the legal and ethical issues on the administration of isolation time out with students identified as behaviorally disordered. Yell's research stemmed from his perception of the need caused by a lack of federal guidelines on the application of behavior management techniques. The author cited the increase in case law that has grown from the use of time out with special education students whose parents have challenged the procedure. Yell's study was qualitative, discussing past research and analyzing case law on the subject of time out. His research yielded a set of guidelines for teachers and administrators to follow before employing time out. Yell's work suggested that teachers become knowledgeable about state and local guidelines concerning the use of techniques designed to reduce misbehaviors and that they keep detailed records on their application

Epanchin, Townsend and Stoddard's Research

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard are psychology professors at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Epanchin's other works included research in behavior management with students identified as behaviorally disordered. Stoddard's previous research focused on the restructuring of special education in the schools.

The authors' 1994 text, Constructive Classroom Management Strategies for Creating Positive Learning Environments, provided a practical approach to managing classroom behaviors. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard discussed the application of time out as a part of a system of management methods that teachers can employ. Their research was qualitative, citing examples and individual scenarios that warrant the application of behavior management techniques. The authors' research did not address data collection to establish a baseline from which to begin the time out procedure or the need for ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of the technique.

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard outlined a series of interventions which can be implemented to prevent the necessity for time out in the classroom setting. Their pre-planned approach to classroom management provided the reader with strategies to address misbehavior before it escalates. The researchers concluded that time out is an aversive procedure that should be used sparingly, and only when the parameters for its use are clearly established in advance. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard suggested applying the least restrictive form of time out, a form of contingent observation they termed "time out at the desk" (p. 170) for behaviors that did not respond to previous interventions.

Patterns in the Literature

In reviewing and analyzing the research, some patterns emerged in the literature. The authors who defined time out as a behavior management technique instituted to remove the student from an environment that has a dense schedule of reinforcement stated that teachers need to be sure the student has access to such reinforcers before employing the time out method. Skiba and Raison (1990) cautioned that there is a potential for time out to serve as an escape from the learning environment if there are not enough reinforcers available in the time-in setting.

Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis (1995) found that an essential step in improving the effectiveness of time out is to be sure that the reinforcement rate for appropriate behaviors in the learning environment is high. Similarly, Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) cited Marr and Roessler's 1986 study, which concluded that time out can be effective only if the situation from which the person was removed was reinforcing to that individual. Understanding the principle behind "time-out from positive reinforcement," (Alberto & Troutman, p. 318) presupposes that the teacher would initiate the time out procedure only if he or she can verify that there was a large difference between the schedule of reinforcement in the time out and the time-in environments (Wielkiewicz, 1995).

Another pattern that developed in the research was the concept that time out should be considered an aversive behavior management technique. (Alberto & Troutman, 1995; Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995; Smith & Rivera, 1993; Yell, 1994) The preponderance of the literature viewed time out as more restrictive than other, less aversive procedures and therefore subject to public scrutiny and abuse. The authors

cautioned that individuals who administer the time out method need to be aware of the possibility of criticism and misunderstanding that can result from the application of the time out procedure (Alberto & Troutman; Gerhardt, Holmes, Alessandri, & Goodman, 1991; Yell, 1994)

Despite the concurrence on the aversive nature of the method among the aforementioned authors, there seemed to be less agreement about what constitutes the specific categories of time out. Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) outlined three types of time out, including nonseclusion, exclusion, and seclusion. Smith and Rivera (1993) noted only two types: exclusion and seclusion. Costenbader and Reading-Brown identified four levels of time out, ranging from planned ignoring, contingent observation, exclusion, and seclusion or isolation.

Skiba and Raison in 1990 delineated six categories of time out, based upon Rutherford and Nelson's 1982 research. The authors considered planned ignoring, planned ignoring plus restraint, contingent observation, reduction of response maintenance in time out, exclusion, and isolation or seclusion time out as the different ways of administering the time out method.

Time Out as an Aversive Technique

The authors who stated that the application of time out should be reserved for physical aggression or destruction of property concluded that isolation or seclusion time out was best-suited as the type of time out to be employed as an intervention for the behavior (Alberto and Troutman; Smith and Rivera). The research of Yell (1994) and Costenbader

and Reading-Brown identified isolation or seclusion time out as the form most subject to litigation. Both studies noted the importance of understanding the principles of behavior management before instituting the procedure.

Wielkiewicz (1995) compared time out to punishment. The author stated that as a form of nonviolent punishment, time out can be considered punishment if the person being removed considers the setting aversive. According to Wielkiewicz, it can also be considered negative punishment if the contingency in operation is denial of access to reinforcing activity. Similarly Costenbader and Reading-Brown stated that some students view time out as a punishment for their behavior. Smith and Rivera cautioned that if time out is administered as a punishment, there may be side effects associated with the method which can erode the relationship between the teacher and student.

Smith and Rivera and Costenbader and Reading-Brown concluded in both their studies that time out fails to teach the appropriate behavior that should take the place of the negative behavior being targeted. They concluded that removing the student from the learning environment denies the individual access to instruction, decreasing the amount of time the student spends in the academic environment and preventing him or her from learning the appropriate behavior. Smith and Rivera concluded that time out should be employed only if less aversive behavior management techniques have failed. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) stated that surface management strategies such as signal interference and proximity control should be attempted before instituting time out. Charney's 1991 text presented a diametrically different purpose for the time out procedure, outlining the method as a part of a system of logical consequences to be used

for minor infractions. In fact, Charney advised that teachers should introduce the time out method during the first week of class as a consequence to breaking school or class rules.

Administration of Time Out

The literature was replete with examples of different ways of administering time out in the regular education classroom. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard reviewed the 1993 research of Smith, Finn, and Dowdy, who outlined four forms of progressively more restrictive time out, including time out at the student's desk, in-class time out, out-of-class time out, or the use of a time out room. Costenbader and Reading-Brown discussed planned ignoring as the least restrictive form of time out, followed by contingent observation, exclusion time out, and the most aversive form of seclusion or isolation time out.

Yell's 1994 research indicated that isolation or seclusion time out was not only the most restrictive or aversive, but also the type of time out most subject to abuse and subsequent litigation. Gerhardt, Holmes, Alessandri, and Goodman (1991) examined the ethical questions of applying isolation time out with people who were autistic or developmentally disabled and living in residential settings.

Safety standards for the use of isolation time out rooms were discussed in Alberto and Troutman (1995) who cited Gast and Nelson's 1977 research which recommended the time out period be kept brief. The National Association of State Directors of Special Education in their 1991 report recommended that monitoring the time out room is essential to ensure the student's safety. Rodgers' 1992 study, the research of Reavis,

Jenson, and Rhode (1994), and Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty's 1992 research similarly stated that in issuing the time out directive, the teacher should avoid engaging in discussion or arguing with the student. Alberto and Troutman also concluded that the wording of the directive to go to time out needs to be concise to prevent extraneous conversation and bargaining with the student. None of the aforementioned authors provided any suggestions or conclusions about whether the teacher should transport the student to the time out room if the student refuses to cooperate, or whether using restraint in lieu of time out should be instituted in such a situation.

Alternatives to Time Out

Throughout the literature researchers provided explanations of less aversive behavior management techniques (Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, 1994; Reavis, Jenson, & Rhode, 1995; Smith & Rivera, 1993). The 1994 research from the National Association of State Directors of Special Education concluded that schools should provide a continuum of placement alternatives in accordance with individuals needs. The directors stated that such placement should consider what is appropriate in the least restrictive environment and match the student's individual needs.

The concept of least restrictive environment was also addressed in the National Association of State Directors of Special Education's 1991 report, which cited Mehfoud and Rosenfeld's 1991 study. The authors concluded that "time out rooms are not an educational program" (p. 11). The NASDE publication stated that if the student is spending more time in the time out room than the educational setting, the special education program is no longer appropriate and requires modification to satisfy the

concept of least restrictive environment and meet the student's educational needs. Documenting the amount of time the student spends in time out was also suggested.

Bateman's 1995 work discussed the concept of least restrictive environment (LRE) outlined in the IDEA Regulations, which addressed the obligation of the schools to make available a full continuum of placements and services available to handicapped students and to consider any harmful effects that these services may have on them. The Mehfoud and Rosenfeld study cited in the 1991 NASDE report was clear in its conclusion that time out rooms were not intended to be instituted as an educational program for [behaviorally disordered] handicapped students.

Selecting a Behavior Management Program

In Wielkiewicz's 1995 text, the author stated that in establishing behavior programs, teachers need to have persistence and flexibility. He further explained that persistence allows the teacher to keep trying new approaches and seeking new information on the problem behavior, while flexibility is needed in modifying or abandoning a behavior management program that has not shown success.

Wielkiewicz suggested that the teacher begin the process by first identifying the problem behavior. The behavior selected must be observable and measurable. Before beginning a new behavior management program, it is necessary to examine if classroom and school rules and consequences have been appropriately and consistently enforced.

The author suggested that the teacher assess how disruptive the behavior is, whether there is a potential danger associated with it, how long the behavior has persisted and

what other interventions have been tried to reduce the behavior. The history and current status of the child's behavior should be examined before choosing the intervention.

If the child is in the regular education setting, the teacher needs to develop a developmentally-appropriate program, according to Wielkiewicz. If the student has been identified as handicapped and is receiving special education services, the teacher will need to convene the student's individualized education program (IEP) team to address the behavioral concerns and develop a management program (Bateman, 1995).

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) suggested that many of the inappropriate behaviors that students display should not be considered serious or require the use of intense interventions such as time out. The authors discussed techniques for addressing these surface behaviors before they escalate and cause disruptions in the classroom.

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard considered planned ignoring as a mild intervention which can be successful in reducing the target behavior. The authors did not classify this technique as a form of time out, and recommended that the teacher immediately reinforce the appropriate behavior as soon as the student demonstrates it. The authors outlined the administration of signal interference, a cuing system between the teacher and student, as another valuable tool in behavior management. By establishing a non-verbal cue before the display of a target behavior, the teacher is able to signal the student to prevent the target behavior from occurring.

Proximity control was another non-aversive measure the authors suggested for controlling inappropriate behaviors in the classroom. By physically positioning him/herself near the student or putting a hand on the student's shoulder, the teacher may be able to

reduce inappropriate behaviors before they escalate and require more restrictive interventions. Another basic tenet of Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard's behavioral intervention repertoire is the removal of distracting objects from the learning environment. This simple management technique can minimize interruptions and prevent unnecessary distractions for students who may be prone to inattentiveness and subsequent misbehavior.

Approaches to Reducing Behaviors

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard outlined the principles of operant learning principles derived from Skinner's 1953 research. According to operant learning theory, the authors stated that behavior is maintained by events and conditions that occur after the demonstration of the behavior. The researchers concluded that the consequences that occur after the behavior determine whether the behavior increases or decreases in frequency. If the behavior increases, the consequences acted as reinforcers; if the behavior decreases, the consequences served as punishers or aversives.

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard discussed employing differential reinforcement (DR), a behavior management technique that focuses on behaviors other than the inappropriate ones. The procedure of differential reinforcement selectively reinforces appropriate behaviors in an attempt to reduce negative ones. One form of differential reinforcement is differential reinforcement of lower rates of behavior (DRL). This method is administered when the goal is to reduce the frequency of the target behavior. Alberto and Troutman (1995) defined DRL as the application of a reinforcement schedule to decrease the rate of behaviors which are tolerable in low rates, but are inappropriate when

they occur too often. In using DRL, the teacher reinforces the behavior when the number of instances of the behavior are equal to or less than what is considered acceptable.

Differential reinforcement of other behaviors (DRO) is a procedure in which a reinforcer is given contingent on the absence of the target behavior over a specified period of time. DRO can also be referred to as differential reinforcement of zero rates of behavior, since it delivers reinforcement only when the student has demonstrated no episodes of the target behavior.

Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) concluded that time out fails to teach appropriate behaviors. Alberto and Troutman suggested employing differential reinforcement of incompatible behavior (DRI) or differential reinforcement of alternative behavior (DRA) to prevent such a void in the student's behavioral repertoire. The authors defined DRI as the method of reinforcing the [appropriate] behavior which is in contrast to the negative behavior. The reinforcement of the behavior that is incompatible with the target behavior increases the rate of the desirable behavior and reduces the negative one. Differential reinforcement of alternative behavior is similar to DRI by reinforcing behaviors that are alternatives to the negative target behavior.

Alberto and Troutman suggested that teachers consider several criteria when selecting incompatible or alternative behaviors. Selecting behaviors that are already in the student's repertoire can enhance the success of DRI and DRA. The authors also suggested that the teacher analyze the inappropriate behavior to determine if it serves a relevant function for the student, such as the student's attempt to communicate. If the negative behavior is determined to have such a function, then a communicative behavior

that is appropriate should be substituted. Alberto and Troutman also recommended that the behavior selected as the alternative should access the reinforcer frequently and consistently and with less effort than the original [negative] behavior. Employing the benchmark of whether the new behavior management method allows the individual consistent access to reinforcement is essential to the effectiveness of such procedures.

Managing Behavior Excesses

In Wielkiewicz's 1995 text, the author differentiated between management of behavior excesses and behavior deficits. Wielkiewicz simply defined behavior excess as doing too much of something deemed undesirable or inappropriate. He stated that ignoring a behavior is the least troublesome method, but suggested that it may take a relatively long time to eliminate the behavior, especially if the behavior has been followed by reinforcement from the teacher or peers in the past.

Wielkiewicz considered the removal of a privilege, reward, or access to a desirable activity as a consequence of behavior excess valid methods of behavior management. The author indicated that although this behavior management method can be successful in reducing the negative behavior, it does not work well if the student loses a majority of his or her privileges, because the built-in incentive is gone, since there is little or nothing left to lose.

Wielkiewicz suggested that teachers identify systems of logical consequences for undesirable behaviors. By letting the logical consequences of the behavior affect the child, a reduction in the behavior is more likely to occur. The author provided the example

of the student who spends the morning engaged in behavior excesses that prevent the completion of his or her school work. In such a case, Wielkiewicz identified the logical consequence of the behavior as staying in at recess to complete the unfinished work. Such a contingency can make the recurrence of the target behavior less likely in the future.

Wielkiewicz (1995) and Alberto and Troutman (1995) identified extinction as a method of managing behavior excesses. Wielkiewicz defined extinction as the gradual decrease in the frequency of a target behavior that occurs when reinforcement is removed. Extinction is the principle which underlies the method of planned ignoring. Wielkiewicz concluded that extinction can be a useful behavior management technique because children's behavior is often rewarded by what the author terms negative attention. Negative attention refers to the verbal consequences of negative behavior, including reprimands, admonishments and comments from the teacher and other students concerning the target behavior exhibited by the student.

Reductive Techniques

Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis (1995) outlined a series of reductive techniques to temporarily stop or reduce misbehavior. The authors stated that such techniques allow teachers to stop or reduce behavioral excesses while they build appropriate replacement behaviors. Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis suggested that in order for the behavioral change to become permanent, functional abilities in social skills, academic performance, and self-management skills need to replace the behavioral excesses. They further concluded that reductive techniques alone generally do not result in permanent behavior change is that students become "immune to punishment," (p. 53). The researchers explained this

immunity by stating that students build up a resistance to shouts, threats and abuse from adults. The authors concluded that teachers need to apply positive procedures to reward appropriate behaviors to establish social, academic, and self-management skills that can replace the behavioral excesses.

Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis suggested that teachers provide a high rate of reinforcement for appropriate behavior and reward any positive behavior that interferes with the misbehavior. This compares with Alberto and Troutman's discussion of the use of differential rates of incompatible behavior (DRI). Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis also suggested that the teacher choose a reductive technique that is potent enough to result in rapid reduction of the misbehavior. They concluded that the teacher needs to identify the behavior early and implement the behavior reduction procedure before the student's behavior is out of control.

Summary

The review and synthesis of research provided the author with definitions and interpretations of time out as a behavior management technique. The authors of two of the studies identified planned ignoring, contingent observation, exclusion, and isolation or seclusion time out as the primary forms of time out (Alberto & Troutman, 1995; Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995). Although the definitions of each progressively more restrictive level of time out varied among the research, all the research that was reviewed indicated that time out can be administered in an inclusionary or exclusionary manner, allowing the student to remain in the learning environment or excluding him or

her from it. Determining whether inclusionary methods will work or if removing the student from the learning environment is necessary requires serious consideration from the teacher (Skiba & Raison, 1990).

Charney's 1991 research was the only study the author reviewed which concluded that time out should be applied to any misbehaviors that could disrupt others in a classroom. Charney suggested introducing the procedure during the first week of school as a method to be instituted for breaking the rules and minor infractions such as testing boundaries.

The majority of the research indicated that time out is an aversive, restrictive method (Alberto & Troutman; Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995; Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, 1994; Smith & Rivera, 1993; Wielkiewicz, 1995; Yell, 1994) to be employed with caution. The research of Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard addressed positive behavior management strategies that can be employed to reduce negative behaviors and prevent the necessity for the time out method. Smith and Rivera also reviewed several behavioral interventions considered to be less restrictive or aversive than time out. Similarly, Wielkiewicz identified a plethora of behavior management techniques which can be effective in the remediation of misbehavior in schools.

The literature was replete with cautions and examples of how the misapplication or abuse of the time out procedure can result in challenges to teachers' authority and the erosion of the teacher-student relationship. Yell (1994) and Wielkiewicz both stressed the process by which teachers can safely apply time out, while continuing to monitor the effectiveness of the procedure on the target behavior. The two studies provided guidelines

for teachers to consider before administering the method and the principles for its appropriate and safe use in schools.

CHAPTER IV

Application of Time Out in the Schools

The review of the research indicated that there are many different forms of time out which can be employed in the educational setting. The continuum of ascending restrictiveness, as cited by Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) allows the teacher to apply the method which best suits the misbehavior. The authors suggested that planned ignoring can be administered by withholding social reinforcement from a student by systematically and deliberately ignoring the inappropriate behavior in an attempt to reduce it. More disruptive behaviors may require more restrictive forms of time out, such as contingent observation, the process of removing a student from the learning activity to observe but not actively participate (Costenbader & Reading-Brown).

Exclusion time out is enforced when the student is removed from the learning environment to sit facing away from the activity, apart from his or her peers and away from objects in the room which may be distracting to the student. This form of time out allows the student to remain in the classroom, but curtails the student's ability to interact in the learning experience (Costenbader & Reading-Brown). Seclusion or isolation time out is the type of time out that is used most in schools, according to Gast and Nelson's 1977 study, as well as the most frequently cited in the literature, as concluded in Rutherford's 1978 research (Costenbader & Reading-Brown).

Twyman, Johnson, Buie, and Nelson (1994) stated that research has shown that

applications of time out can be effective in decreasing the frequency or duration of many misbehaviors, including physical or verbal aggression and tantrums. Skiba and Raison's 1990 research cited Forehand and Mac Donough's 1975 study, which found that time out can produce immediate and lasting suppression of inappropriate behavior.

Durand and Carr's 1992 quantitative research concluded that time out can be effective as a remediation for attention-getting negative behavior. The authors stated that time out can be more successful than similar techniques, such as extinction, because of the association of a salient stimulus with the termination of attention from the adult. Costenbader and Reading-Brown indicated that isolation time out has been proven effective with students in special education, residential schools, psychiatric facilities, day treatment centers, and public schools. The review of the literature provided descriptions of how the time out procedure can be applied in both regular education's inclusive setting and in special education classrooms.

Inclusive Settings

Charney's 1991 research discussed the application of time out in elementary classrooms to reduce behaviors which could interfere with the learning environment and cause disruptions. Charney concluded that the method should be administered for minor infractions to prevent them from escalating and suggested that teachers explain the procedures for time out to students during the first week of school. Her approach of employing time out for what Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1949) termed surface behaviors differed from other researchers' (Smith & Rivera, 1993; Wielkiewicz, 1995; Alberto & Troutman, 1995) but was similar to the application of time out in regular

education that the author of this work has observed. Charney indicated that planned ignoring of misbehavior is contrary to her philosophy of classroom management. Rather than ignoring the behavior, she suggested administering time out for any behavior which violates the rules or tests the boundaries of the classroom behavior management system.

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard's research (1994) suggested that teachers employ surface management techniques before progressing to time out, which they viewed as more aversive and restrictive. When surface management fails or the behavior is aggressive or destructive, the authors concede that time out may be the necessary management method. Their conclusion states that for less serious instances of aggression can be remediated by employing time out at the student's desk, a form of contingent observation, in which the student is allowed to remain in the learning environment. If the behavior is deemed more aggressive or potentially destructive, the researchers indicated that time out in class [exclusion] or the use of a time out room [seclusion] may be warranted.

Time Out for Aggressive Behavior

Wielkiewicz (1995) suggested that the application of time out be reserved for serious misbehavior, including physical aggression and destruction of property. Similarly Smith and Rivera (1993) and Abramowitz and O'Leary (1991) concluded that seclusion or isolation time out should be reserved for out-of-control behaviors, employing less aversive or restrictive techniques before progressing to time out. They cautioned that if teachers employ time out for less serious behaviors, they are unable to control serious ones.

Wielkiewicz stated that time out can work if the teacher understands the principles behind the procedure, concluding that teachers must first realize that time out is intended as a consequence for serious misbehavior or violence. Wielkiewicz further suggested that teachers begin by identifying the behavior and assess how disruptive or dangerous it is, how long the behavior has been demonstrated, and what other methods have been attempted to reduce the misbehavior.

Wielkiewicz outlined the process that teachers should follow before instituting the time out procedure. The author stressed that after collecting and analyzing the parameters listed above, it is important that the baseline information be used as the basis for ongoing data collection throughout the application of the time out method. If the information collected about the frequency of the target behavior after the administration of time out indicates that the technique is not working, then the teacher must either modify or discontinue its use and employ another method to reduce the behavior.

Effective Application of Time Out

Abramowitz and O'Leary (1991) concluded that in order to implement time out ethically and effectively, the teacher should administer time out contingent on behaviors that are maintained by attention. They also cautioned that teachers should consider how they will handle noncompliance with the behavior before it occurs. The question of whether to apply restraint becomes an issue in determining such circumstances in the application of the time out method.

Durand and Carr (1992) stated that the success of time out appeared to involve the removal of adult attention as a consequence for the behaviors. When students use time out

as an escape from work or other tasks they find undesirable, the purpose of the time out procedure. Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) noted that a disadvantage of time out as a behavior reduction technique is that some students consider the setting a positive reinforcement for their behavior. Skiba and Raison (1990) similarly stated that time out may serve as an escape from the academic setting for students who do not find the inclusive setting reinforcing or positive.

Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis (1995) concluded that teachers who combine the time out directive with a precision request sentence are better able to improve the effectiveness of the procedure. Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty also stated that teachers need to immediately and concisely issue the time out directive, following each occurrence of the target behavior. Their research cited Clark's 1989 research, which suggested the use of the 10-10 rule, which states that the negative behavior should be confronted by the teacher within ten seconds of its occurrence with no more than ten words.

Alberto and Troutman (1995) suggested that teachers refrain from discussing the reasons for the time out with the student if he or she begins to argue or rationalize the behavior that resulted in the time out order. Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis stated that the teacher needs to explain the entire time out procedure before it is enacted, so that when the misbehavior occurs, the teacher simply re-identifies the behavior and issues the directive with no negotiation or explanation. Avoiding discussion with the student is essential to effective application of time out and can prevent escalation of the student's behavior.

Special Education Settings

Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) stated that Ruhl's 1985 study found that 88 percent of special education teachers used time out procedures. Yell (1994) cited Zabel's 1986 survey of special education teachers, which concluded that 70 percent of the teachers of behaviorally disordered students employed some form of time out in their classrooms.

Time Out and the Individualized Education Program

Before applying time out to a special education student, Yell concluded that teachers need to be aware of state and local policies regarding time out. In the absence of federal guidelines Yell concluded that such understanding is essential. Having written procedures on the use of time out and obtaining permission for their administration are also important, according to Yell. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (1995) also stated that teachers need to keep detailed written procedures on the administrative steps in the time out procedure. The authors concluded that receiving written consent from parents before employing isolation or seclusion time out helps to assure that the parent is acting with the understanding and approval of the parents.

The student's individualized education program (IEP) should include any details of the administration of time out with the student, as well as the exact procedures to be enacted in the process. The IEP team should be involved in making any decisions about the use of time out or any behavior reduction program. Yell stated that time out must serve a legitimate educational function. Similarly the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction indicated that teachers should consider whether time out relates to the goals and

objectives identified in the student's IEP. If restraint is applied because the student refuses to go to time out, and his or her behavior escalates to a level deemed unsafe or destructive, the use of restraint must also be included in the IEP and separate records of its application need to be maintained.

The importance of keeping thorough records on the administration of time out, noting each instance of its application and including the names, date, time, target behavior, specific time out procedure employed, the length of the time out period, the results of the procedure, and the names of any witnesses present (Yell). The author designed a form for teachers to use in the record-keeping process (see Appendix B). In addition to the identification of the specifics involved in the application of time out which Yell recommended, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) stated that teachers must employ less restrictive techniques before time out and document what methods have been unsuccessfully tried in reducing the behavior.

Safety Considerations

The Wisconsin DPI recommended that the time out period should be kept as brief as possible and estimated that one minute per year of the child can be a useful standard in determining the length of the time out. The DPI authors further concluded that if the time out extends beyond 15 minutes, the student must have access to drinking water and bathroom facilities.

Yell's 1994 research cited guidelines from Gast and Nelson's 1977 study in the employment of a time out isolation room, recommending that the room should be at least

six feet by six feet and be free of fixtures or other items which the student could use to harm him/herself. Gast and Nelson stated that the room should also be properly lighted and ventilated and designed in a manner that allows the teacher to be able to see and hear the child at all times.

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (1991) outlined the importance of monitoring the time out room. Citing Mehfoud and Rosenfeld's 1991 research, the directors cautioned that if the student is spending more time in the isolation room than the educational setting, the special education program can no longer be considered appropriate and should be modified. Wielkiewicz (1995) suggested that discussing the progress of the student's behavior management program with his or her parents and the IEP team can provide valuable assistance in appropriate modifications to prevent the misapplication of time out.

Wielkiewicz's Model

Wielkiewicz identified a step-by-step process that teachers can follow to ensure that time out program is as effective as possible. First Wielkiewicz noted that the teacher needs to identify the misbehavior which warrants the use of time out. Consideration of whether the student is demonstrating the behavior to gain attention or to inflict harm on others or their property should be evaluated. Those behaviors which are intended to shock or to demand attention may be successfully reduced with less restrictive measures. The next step the author outlined was to redefine the problem behavior by reviewing school records and logs to determine any patterns in the occurrence of the behavior. In the process of reviewing the available information on the student's past behavior, the teacher needs to

examine what previous interventions have been tried and how those procedures were administered. Wielkiewicz stressed that such analysis should lead the individualized education program team members to a group concensus on what behavior management method is applied next.

The teacher needs to collect baseline date on the rate or frequency with which the target behavior occurs before the time out program is applied. This baseline serves as the standard against which future data is compared. Defining the target behavior in detailed, observable, quantifiable terms is a prerequisite to obtaining the baseline data. The length of time for collecting the baseline data will vary with the seriousness of the misbehavior. In instances where the behavior is judged to be dangerous, the IEP team may decide to develop an estimate of the baseline rate by reviewing existing logs on the episodes of the occurrence of the target behavior.

Once the time out program has been written with the collaboration of the members of the IEP team, the teacher needs to continue to collect data on the results of the procedure to determine its effectiveness or the reasons for modification. Any changes in the program should be discussed with the team members and the student's parents. The progress or lack of success should be reported regularly to the team and the parents so that feedback can be obtained and the necessary revisions can be stated in the IEP, the working document for the student's behavior management program. Collaboration among IEP team members, parents, and the teacher applying the time out procedure is essential in the proper administration of the time out method (Wielkiewicz).

Age and Grade Differentials

In elementary schools time out is employed in the regular education and special education classrooms. Charney (1991) discussed the application of time out in elementary schools and provided examples of how to employ the method, identifying different procedures to be practiced with children between the ages of five and twelve. Providing specific examples of what steps teachers should follow, Charney recommended that teachers follow a pre-planned procedure for releasing children of different ages from time out.

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard's text (1994) does not specifically state that the behavior management methods the authors espouse were intended for elementary-aged children, but the examples and information appeared focus on teaching five to eleven or twelve-year-old children. The time out method as it was described and prescribed by the researchers involved removing the child from a self-contained classroom, typical of the elementary, not middle or high school setting.

The methods and procedures outlined in Smith and Rivera's research (1993) were intended to be studied and employed by teachers and administrators from preschool to secondary schools, according to the preface of the text. The basic tenets of behavior management strategies discussed in the text were intended for teachers of any grade level. The authors seemed to imply that there are inherent dangers associated with the application of time out with secondary students, cautioning the reader to be aware of any "potential hazards involved with timeout and the removal of a student from instruction" (p. 139).

Time Out with Elementary-Aged Special Education Students

Skiba and Raison (1995) studied children in the second through the sixth grade who had been identified as behaviorally disordered. The researchers used young subjects in their research because Zabel's 1986 survey concluded that younger students experienced time out more often than older students (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995). Costenbader and Reading-Brown's 1995 research studied 79 students in kindergarten through sixth grade and 77 individuals in grades seven through twelve and found that the time out method was employed more frequently with the older students in the residential facility.

Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) stated that placing the student in a time out room allows the child time to regain control of his or her emotions, while permitting the teacher the opportunity to restore order in the work environment. The popularity of the time out method with teachers of elementary-aged behaviorally disordered students was noted in Ruhl's 1985 research (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995)

Time Out with Students in Middle and Secondary Levels

The literature that the author reviewed did not specifically address the application of time out with middle or high school students. Wielkiewicz (1995) outlined several behavior management procedures which he identified as appropriate for use by teachers of school-aged children. Similarly Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) discussed constructive classroom management strategies without excluding any age or grade level

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's A Programming Guide for Emotional Disturbance (1995) was written for teachers of students from preschool to grade twelve. The authors provided guidelines for the administration of time out, including obtaining parental consent and writing the procedural steps to be employed in the student's individualized education program (IEP). The DPI further stated that teachers who find it necessary to administer physical restraint techniques when students either refuse to go to time out or become dangerous to themselves in the time out room need to aware that such behavior management methods carry with them a potential for physical harm to the student, his or her peers, and the teacher. In the case of high school and some middle school students, this possibility of the time out method resulting in an escalation of behavior that can cause destruction of property or physical injury should be considered. Whether the student has been identified as emotionally disturbed or is fully integrated in classes with his or her peers, the teacher needs to consider the potential complications such as violence toward others or destruction of property that can occur when a disruptive student is ordered to go to a time out room as a consequence for that behavior.

Summary

In summary time out is a method which has been documented as a popular method among elementary special education teachers, according to Ruhl's 1985 research (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995) and Zabel's 1986 survey (Yell, 1994). The application of time out gained popularity in the 1970s, following Skinner's laboratory research with pigeons, who learned through operant conditioning how to receive reinforcement [food] when the time out period was over. The success of Skinner's

research seemed to lead teachers to employ the time out procedure with their students, particularly elementary-aged children, to reduce disruptive and non-compliant behaviors in the classroom and special education rooms.

This author has observed the administration of time out in many settings, including day care facilities, elementary classrooms and special education rooms designated for children identified with emotional disturbances. Although time out is a method that Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) viewed as one of many techniques that can be used as a part of a behavior management program with students of any age, the author of this work has concluded that time out is more frequently applied with younger students than those at the secondary level.

The review of the research seemed to indicate those who researched the subject of time out as a behavior management technique either provide examples and research about its use with young students or present the method as one that can be applied in any grade level. Nowhere in the author's reviewing of the literature did she find examples or information which was specific to the secondary level or otherwise identified time out as a procedure to be employed with older student populations. This void in the literature, combined with the author's own knowledge and observations, has led to the conclusion that time out is administered primarily with young children in the lower grade levels.

CHAPTER V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

To summarize the findings from the review of literature, time out is a method which is widely practiced in family, day care, residential facilities and schools. Its popularity has been increasing since the 1970s in the schools, following the laboratory research of B. F. Skinner and the subsequent application of the method with students. The research reflected a variety of interpretations of the purpose of time out, the parameters under which it should be applied, and the procedures to be enacted in the application of the method.

There seemed to be some concensus on the different forms that the time out procedure can take. Some of the authors whose works were reviewed recognized four types of time out: planned ignoring, contingent observation, exclusion time out, and isolation or seclusion time out (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995; Smith & Rivera, 1993). Other researchers did not consider planned ignoring as a category of time out (Brooks, Perry, & Hingerty, 1992; Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, 1994), while Skiba and Raison (1990) outlined six different categories of time out.

Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard cited Smith, Finn, and Dowdy's research (1993), which identified four forms of progressively more restrictive time out to be employed in the inclusive classroom. The authors noted time out at the desk, in-class time out, out of class time out, and seclusion time out as the four levels of time out that can be instituted

on a continuum of increasing restrictiveness. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard suggested that teachers employ the least restrictive form of time out, matching the behavior with the technique which best suits the situation and the individual student.

Many researchers discussed the aversive nature of time out and compared the procedure to other reductive techniques. Smith and Rivera's research (1993) and Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard's study (1994) concluded that time out is an aversive behavior management method which should be reserved for severely disruptive or aggressive behaviors. Alberto and Troutman (1995) and Wielkiewicz (1995) also stated that time out is a restrictive technique, and suggested that teachers need to establish a baseline for the target behavior before instituting the time out procedure and collect ongoing data to monitor the effectiveness of the method.

Summary

The research question, "How can time out be used effectively in the schools?" led the author to review a wide array of studies and textbooks which addressed the application of time out as a behavior management method. The literature was replete with examples of how the procedure has been applied in inclusive and special education classrooms since the first documentation of the administration of time out in schools in the 1970s.

Value of Time Out for the Teacher

The time out method can produce an immediate reduction in the demonstration of a negative behavior, according to the research by Forehand and Mac Donough in 1975 (Skiba & Raison, 1990). The research of Twyman, Johnson, Buie, and Nelson (1994)

similarly concluded that application of time out can be effective in decreasing the frequency or duration or many misbehaviors, including physical or verbal aggression or tantrums. Durand and Carr (1992) concluded that time out can be effective in reducing attention-getting behavior, by removing the reinforcers that are maintaining the behavior.

The time out method can provide the teacher with a means of reducing undesirable behaviors which disrupt the class environment. Charney (1991) viewed time out as a procedure that protected the other students' opportunity to learn without behavioral distractions. The author further stated that by applying time out early in the demonstration of the behavior, the teacher is better able to prevent the behavior from escalating and preventing further disruptions.

Time out can be a convenient means for the teacher to ignore the student's behavior and continue his or her instruction with the rest of the students. Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) and Smith and Rivera (1993) considered planned ignoring as an effective and less restrictive form of time out than exclusion or isolation. Such ignoring allows the teacher to continue teaching, while withholding reinforcement from the student demonstrating the misbehavior. Such ignoring can be helpful with minor infractions which are attention-getting (Durand & Carr, 1992) but can result in an increase in the frequency or intensity of more serious misbehaviors.

Allowing the student time to cool off by directing him or her to time out can assist the teacher in helping the individual understand that his or her behavior will not be tolerated. When the consequence of time out is viewed as aversive or undesirable by the student, the

teacher may see a reduction in the behavior in the future. Conversely, if the student views time out as preferable to the learning environment, a decrease in the frequency of the negative behavior may not occur.

Costenbader and Reading-Brown concluded that time out has gained popularity among teachers and child care workers because it can protect the teacher and other students from verbal and physical abuse. The authors also stated that the method is an inexpensive procedure to enact with students, requiring little more than a physical space away from the learning environment.

When teachers choose not to record baseline information on the student's behavior or collect ongoing data as the time out method is applied, the record-keeping involved in the administration of time out can be minimal. As Charney's research indicated, time out can be a useful tool in the classroom as a means of enforcing rules and maintaining order.

Value of Time Out to the Student's Classmates

The high percentage of teachers who responded to Zabel's 1986 survey (Costenbader and Reading-Brown, 1995) indicated that they employ some form of time out with their students identified as behaviorally disordered. The result of this survey seemed to suggest that the teachers not only saw a benefit in the application of time out, they also viewed it as necessary for the protection of other students. The review of the literature contained many examples of how time out can be administered for physical aggression and destruction of property. Alberto and Troutman (1995) and Wielkiewicz (1995) concluded that time out should be reserved for student behaviors which are out of control. This philosophy implies that time out should be used to protect the student community and the

property of students and teachers.

Charney (1991) concluded that time out in the elementary classroom can and should be used as a consequence for breaking rules and can be helpful in protecting the educational opportunities of other students who may be distracted by the misbehavior. Although Charney's viewpoint that time out should be applied for minor infractions, rather than as a consequence for severe, out-control behavior is contrary to other researchers (Alberto & Troutman, 1995; Wielkiewicz, 1995), it demonstrates the teacher's intent to use time out to protect other students in the learning environment while maintaining order.

This author has witnessed the administration of seclusion time out following demonstrations of physical aggression against other students and can attest to its effectiveness in protecting the victim of the violence by isolating the offending student in the time out room. Other observations of the administration of time out seemed to prevent the other students from becoming distracted from the teacher's instruction, but in those instances it was not clear to the observer if time out was the appropriate behavior management method for reducing the misbehavior and insulating the other students from the disruption.

Value of Time Out to the Individual Student

Employing the broad definition of time out as "time to cool off and regain control" (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 1995, p. 51), students who are directed to time out are given the opportunity to regain their self-control and terminate their demonstration of misbehavior. The time out method can also prevent the student from

engaging in physical aggression or destruction of property which might injure him or her or cause damage or destruction to property.

Less aversive forms of time out, such as exclusion or contingent observation can remove the student from the stimulus that is suspected of reinforcing the negative behavior. Yell concluded in his research (1994) that the teacher needs to make a decision about whether it would be more effective to remove the student from the reinforcing situation or remove the distractors or objects that are helping to maintain the behavior. For example, if a student is playing with an object during instruction time and his or her actions are distracting the other students and/or the teacher, the teacher needs to decide whether to remove the object the student is manipulating or remove the student. This determination, if made correctly, can help the student to reduce or eliminate the undesirable behavior and resume his or her previous level of expected performance.

Conclusions

The review of the research suggested that time out can be an effective method in behavior management in the schools (Skiba & Raison, 1990; Twyman, Johnson, Buie, & Nelson, 1994). Abramowitz and O'Leary (1991) concluded that in order to implement time out ethically and effectively, the method should be administered contingent upon behaviors that are maintained by attention. The administration of the method and the form of time out that is chosen by the teacher should ideally be based upon the understanding of operant learning principles (Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, 1994) and the consideration of the student's unique needs (Bateman, 1995). The history of past attempts to remediate the behavior should be reviewed before time out is selected as the procedure

to be introduced as the consequence for the target behavior. Smith and Rivera (1993) outlined a continuum of procedures that teachers need to consider before employing time out. Their graphic description of the Intervention Ladder (see Appendix A) provided examples of less aversive and restrictive techniques which they suggested that teachers apply before instituting time out procedures.

Advantages of Administering Time Out

As Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) concluded, time out is an inexpensive technique to employ in schools. The application of the method requires little more than a separate space, free of distractions, away from the learning environment. When the time out is not seclusionary, requiring a separate room, it can be designed by clearing a few desks from the back of a classroom and placing one of the desks facing a bare wall.

As Durand and Carr (1992) concluded, time out can be effective in reducing behaviors which are demonstrated to gain attention. Wielkiewicz (1995) noted that when the learning environment contains a high schedule of reinforcement that is accessible to the student, the removal of that student to time out can reduce the misbehavior, since the time out area contains little or no reinforcement for the behavior. Similarly Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) concluded that time out can be effective if the situation from which the person was removed was reinforcing to that individual.

The administration of time out allows the teacher to demonstrate that he or she can institute consequences for the student's misbehavior. Since operant learning theory states that behavior is maintained by events and conditions that occur after the exhibition of the

target behavior, the directive to time out can serve as a powerful consequence in reducing the frequency or intensity of the misbehavior (Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, 1994).

Shortcomings of Time Out

Although the time out method can reduce the demonstration of the target behavior, Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis (1995) cautioned that the application of reductive techniques alone generally do not result in permanent behavior change. The researchers advised that teachers need to apply positive procedures to reward appropriate behaviors if a lasting change is to occur. Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) concluded that time out fails to teach appropriate behaviors because the student is removed from the opportunity to learn, rather than instructed on the appropriate replacement behavior.

Skiba and Raison (1990) stated that time out can serve as an escape from the academic setting for some students. The authors concluded that the escape reaction may be the most undesirable side effect of the procedure, serving as a reinforcer for the negative behavior. Similarly Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) noted that some individuals consider being in the time out environment a positive reinforcement for their behavior.

Wielkiewicz (1995) stated that when the student is working on a task that he or she finds difficult or frustrating or if the student perceives the time-in environment to be boring, the time out period may serve as a reinforcer for the negative behavior. Wielkiewicz also stated that if the student receives social reinforcement from peers or the teacher during time out or if the time out environment has desirable distractions for he student, the procedure may be counter-productive by reinforcing the negative behavior.

Wielkiewicz concluded that time out is a behavior management technique with a high potential for misuse. The author stated that the greatest disadvantage to employing the method is that the child loses valuable instruction time during the time out period. Wielkiewicz considered time out as a form of nonviolent punishment, suggesting that the procedure can be considered punishment if it is assumed that being denied access to reinforcers during the time out period is aversive.

Punishment was defined by Smith and Rivera (1993) as the application of an aversive consequence following a negative behavior. Although the researchers cited Heron's research (1978) and the study by Smith, Polloway, and West (1979) which concluded that such punishment causes a quick suppression of the behavior, the authors concluded that punishment teaches the person what not to do, but fails to instruct the individual on the appropriate behavior.

Time Out in Practice

Ruhl's 1985 research (Yell, 1994) and Zabel's 1986 survey (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995) indicated that over 70 percent of the teachers in the studies employed some form of time out in their classrooms. Neither author discussed what procedures and parameters were employed by the teachers in the application of the time out method. The review of research seemed to indicate that there are many different ways in which time out is administered, as well as many reasons for selecting the method for behavior management.

Abramowitz and O'Leary (1991) noted that time out is a behavior reduction technique which can be difficult to implement properly. Durand and Carr's study (1992) concluded

that since the success of time out appears to involve the loss of adult attention for the behavior, it is best applied as a consequence for behaviors which are emitted to gain attention. In administering time out, Abramowitz and O'Leary suggested that the time out directive should be issued contingent upon each instance of the negative behavior in order to be effective in reducing that behavior.

Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis' research (1995) found that when teachers combine the time out directive with a precision request sentence, they are better able to improve the effectiveness of the procedure. Similarly Brooks, Perry, and Hingerty (1992) emphasized that the teacher needs to issue the time out request immediately after the demonstration of the target behavior.

The review of the research indicated that time out is administered for a variety of behaviors, ranging from talking (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995) to physical aggression and destruction of property (Alberto & Troutman, 1995; Smith & Rivera, 1993; Wielkiewicz, 1995). Charney's time out model (1991) indicated that time out is a behavior management technique that is used for minor infractions in the classroom and should be introduced to the whole class as a part of the discussion of class rules and behavioral consequences during the first week of school.

Observations on the Administration of Time Out

This author has observed the application of time out in inclusionary classrooms and special education resource rooms and concurs with the researchers' findings that the method is frequently applied across settings for a wide variety of undesirable behaviors.

The administration of time out has been witnessed as a consequence for not paying attention to the teacher, not working on homework at the designated time, and for more serious misbehaviors such as verbal or physical aggression toward the teacher or other students.

Yell (1994) and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) (1995) stressed the importance of keeping records on the application of the time out procedure each time that it is used. Bateman (1995) and Yell both suggested that teachers also obtain parental permission before employing the method and become knowledgeable about state and local guidelines for the administration of the technique. Although this author has observed some evidence that teachers of students identified as emotionally disturbed include their description of the use of time out in the student's individualized education program (IEP), teachers in inclusive classrooms do not have such documentation available for their students. In the absence of a formal document such as the IEP, the teacher may still obtain oral or written permission from the child's parents before instituting the time out procedure, but the author has observed that this consent process is not always followed. Similarly the author of this work has observed that the collection of data to analyze the effectiveness of time out once it has been enacted is not always practiced. This absence of record-keeping can leave the teacher with no documentation to justify the continued use of time out and can leave the teacher open to criticism and challenges from parents and other adults who are also involved in the child's behavior management program.

Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) stated that practitioners who use isolation time out as a behavior management strategy must address legal and ethical concerns.

Yell (1994) concluded that time out has not only been the cause of great debate, it has also been a frequent subject of litigation. The Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders in 1990 provided a summary of guidelines for teachers employing behavior reduction techniques (Wielkiewicz, 1995). Yell's research also outlined a list of guidelines for teachers to follow before and during the application of the time out method. At the time that this review and synthesis of the research was written, the author of this work was not aware of any teachers who have any knowledge or understanding of these guidelines.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in their 1995 text provided some procedures for teachers to follow in employing the time out method with students identified with emotional disturbances. The advice contained in the manual would not be considered comprehensive, in comparison to Yell's or the Council for Children with Behavior Disorders' guidelines. It is unclear at this writing what attempts the State of Wisconsin is making to clarify or expand these procedural tenets or make them available to teachers who use time out with students in inclusionary classrooms.

Recommendations

The review and analysis of the research on the subject of time out was performed because of the author's interest in comprehending how separating children from their peers as a consequence for misbehavior can be effectively implemented as a behavior reduction technique. After observing the use of time out in many inclusive and special education classrooms, questions were formulated about why the procedure had become prevalent in

the schools. The review of the literature also focused on the appropriate execution of the time out method in an attempt to understand what principles of learning and psychology provide the foundation for the safe and effective application of time out as a behavior management technique.

Principles of Learning

According to operant learning theory, a behavior is maintained by events and conditions which occur after the demonstration of the behavior. These principles were derived from B.F. Skinner's 1953 research, as cited by Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994). The authors concluded that the consequences which occur after emission of the target behavior determine whether the behavior will increase or decrease in frequency. When the behavior increases, the consequence is considered to be a reinforcer; if the behavior decreases, the consequence can be considered a punishment or an aversive consequence.

By understanding how operant learning works, the teacher needs to consider whether the time out [consequence] is helping to maintain the behavior or is resulting in decreasing the negative behavior. When the teacher has collected no baseline information on the frequency or duration of the demonstration of the behavior before the enactment of the time out procedure, he or she has little or no basis for comparison to determine if the procedure is producing the intended results. Ongoing data collection on the frequency and duration time of the misbehavior following the institution of the time out method can assist the teacher in analyzing whether the method is effective in reducing the undesirable behavior.

Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) noted that time out fails to teach more appropriate behaviors to the offending student. As Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis (1995) stated, reductive techniques can only stop or reduce a misbehavior temporarily. They concluded that teachers need to teach replacement behaviors, providing the student with examples of what behavior is expected, modeling that behavior, and allowing the student to practice the behavior, so that it becomes part of the student's behavioral repertoire. Rhode, Jenson, and Reavis also suggested that teachers give their students positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior, rewarding any positive behavior that interferes with the misbehavior. In doing so, the teacher is able to increase the frequency of the appropriate behavior while reducing or eliminating the negative behavior.

Understanding Rules and Regulations

Yell's research (1994) suggested that teachers first need to understand the principles underlying time out and how to apply it and then become aware of local and state policies on its use. Yell stated that teachers should have written procedures on the use of time out, including the rationale for its application, the rules during time out, the length of time out and how the release from time out will be performed. Yell further noted that teachers need to obtain written consent from parents before enacting the time out procedure and discuss the implementation of the method so that parents understand the process.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in 1995 similarly stated that teachers must obtain parental permission for the time out procedure and include the details of the method in the student's individualized education program (IEP). The DPI advised

that they do not have established construction specifications for time out rooms, nor do they have "other legal parameters" (p. 52) for the application of time out, but cautioned that time out must serve a legitimate educational function which relates to the goals and objectives stated in the student's IEP. The DPI also suggested that teachers keep a time-out log to detail each instance of the administration of the method and noted that time outs that extend beyond the maximum recommendation of 15 minutes should be interrupted for satisfaction of student needs such as getting a drink of water or using the bathroom. Implying that time out is an aversive procedure, the DPI stated that the goal of time out should be to eliminate its use as soon as possible.

Wielkiewicz (1995), Yell (1994) and the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (1991) recommended that teachers provide continual monitoring of the student in time out. Similarly the Wisconsin DPI noted that monitoring the student visually and being able to hear the student in the isolation room is essential to promote safe employment of the time out method.

The DPI also suggested that the time out room be ventilated, free of obstructions that might harm the student, and must have light. Alberto and Troutman (1995) cited the recommendations of Gast and Nelson's 1977 research, which concluded that the time out period should be brief, from one to five minutes. The researchers also stated that the time out room should be no less than six feet wide by six feet long and that the door remain unlocked. Wisconsin's DPI did not rule out the use of locked doors in time out rooms, but discouraged the practice. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction used a benchmark of one minute per year of the age of the child in determining how long the time

out period should last, stating that fifteen minutes was a "useful standard" (p. 52). The DPI did not elaborate about what other parameters teachers should employ to determine a reasonable and effective period for the time out.

Consideration of the Student's Unique Needs

Before implementing time out as a behavior management technique, it is important that the teacher review the history of what interventions have been tried in the past to reduce or eliminate the misbehavior. Examining the student's cumulative file along with any information concerning the student's assessment and placement in a special education program should be part of the teacher's research. If the student has been identified as qualified to receive special education services, the history of prior interventions can be discussed by the individuals who become part of the child's individualized education program (IEP) team.

Consideration of the student's unique needs may mean that the teacher must find other behavior management methods to reduce the behavior while protecting the student. As Durand and Carr (1992) concluded, time out can be effective with behaviors which are attention-getting. If the behavior that is demonstrated is not a result of the student's need for attention, then the time out procedure has less chance of succeeding. The teacher's understanding of the student's history in relation to the misbehavior, along with the knowledge of the child and his or her ability or inability to control the behavior are essential in choosing and designing a behavior management program that is appropriate for the individual.

Time out is considered an aversive behavior reduction technique by many researchers (Alberto & Troutman, 1995;Costenbader & Reading-Brown, 1995; Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard, 1994; Skiba & Raison, 1990; Smith & Rivera, 1993; Twyman, Johnson, Buie, & Nelson, 1994; Wielkiewicz, 1995; Yell, 1994). The research of Alberto and Troutman; Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard; and Smith and Rivera were replete with examples of how less aversive behavior management methods could be applied to reduce misbehaviors and teach replacement behaviors.

Smith and Rivera cautioned that the application of an aversive consequence following a negative behavior carried with it possible side effects. Such side effects can erode the relationship between the teacher and student, since the student may often associate the punishment with the teacher who instituted it. The student may avoid the teacher or the school setting, according to the researchers. Such punishment does not tend to generalize, so it may have to be repeated in many environments and situations to effectively reduce the behavior.

Charney's (1991) administration of time out as a behavior management technique for entire classrooms of children seems to fall short of the recognition of each child's individual needs and the history of past attempts to remediate the behavior. The author stated that the method does not work for all children, recognizing that children whose behavior seems to be a result of their desire to violate rules and defy the teacher may not benefit from the time out procedure. Her blanket approach of introducing time out as a part of the classroom rule and consequence system seems to ignore the teacher's need to consider the student's individual needs before employing behavior management methods

Proceed with Caution

Costenbader and Reading-Brown (1995) and Yell (1994) stated in their research that time out has a high potential for misuse and subsequent challenges from parents and other individuals who are involved in the behavior management of the child. Epanchin, Townsend, and Stoddard (1994) the time that the student spends in time out should be closely monitored to guard against excessive practices. Wielkiewicz (1995) cited the 1993 research of Wherry, which concluded that the use of time out involves the potential for violating the rights of the student. Wherry suggested that teachers should employ time out only in situations where the student's behavior creates a major disruption. The author summarized his findings by noting that the practitioner can usually avoid potential problems if time out is employed to decrease the most disruptive behaviors while instituting concurrent programs to increase appropriate behaviors.

When time out is issued in an angry, punitive manner, the possibility of the negative side effects outlined by Smith and Rivera (1993) becomes more likely. Applying time out in a pre-planned, thoughtful manner includes reviewing existing information on past attempts at remediating the behavior, obtaining information to enhance one's understanding of the principles which provide the foundation for the method's appropriate and effective use. Choosing time out as a behavior management technique should result only after less aversive interventions have been unsuccessfully applied (Costenbader & Reading-Brown, Epanchin, Townsend, & Stoddard; Smith & Rivera). Careful monitoring of the method, including the frequency of the behavior after the time out procedure was

instituted, should be used to ensure that the procedure is having its intended effect by reducing the target behavior.

Consideration should be given to teaching the student appropriate replacement behaviors. These positive behaviors need to be reinforced by the teacher to ensure that they will remain in the student's behavioral repertoire, while the negative behavior is reduced or eliminated. A thorough understanding of operant learning principles and behavior management methods can greatly assist the teacher in establishing logical and ethical behavioral consequences. Such consequences should be delivered systematically, consistently and with regard for the student's individual needs and the student community.

REFERENCES

Abramowitz, A. J., & O'Leary, S. G. (1991). Behavioral interventions for the classroom: Implications for students with ADHD. School Psychology Review, 20 (2), 220-234.

Alberto, P. A., & Troutman, A. C. (1995). Applied behavior analysis for teachers. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bateman, B. (1995). Better IEPs. Creswell, OR: Otter Ink.

Brooks, N. C., Perry, V., & Hingerty, S. E. (1992). Modifying behavior through time out from positive reinforcement [Monograph]. Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment Bulletin,25, (3), 93-95.

Charney, R. S. (1991). Teaching children to care: Management in the responsive classroom. Greenfield, MA: Northeast Foundation for Children.

Costenbader, V., & Reading-Brown, M. (1995). Isolation timeout used with students with emotional disturbance. Exceptional Children, 61 (4), 353-363.

Durand, V. M., & Carr, E. G. (1992). An analysis of maintenace following functional communication training. Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 25 (4), 777-794.

Epanchin, B. C., Townsend, B., & Stoddard, K. (1994). Constructive classroom management strategies for creating positive learning environments. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Fox, R. A., Fox, T. A., & Anderson, R. C. (1991). Measuring the effectiveness of the STAR parenting program with parents of young children. Psychological Reports, 68 (1), 35-40.

Gerhardt, P., Holmes, D. L., Alessandri, M., & Goodman, M. (1991). Social policy on the use of aversive interventions: Empirical, ethical, and legal considerations. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 21 (3), 265-280.

Hayes v. Unified School District No. 377, 877 F.2d 809 (10th Cir. 1989).

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (1994). Disciplining students with disabilities: A synthesis of critical and emerging issues. Washington, DC: Special Education Programs. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 378 712)

National Association of State Directors of Special Education (1991). An overview of standards and policy on the use of time out as a behavior management strategy. Washington, DC: Special Education Programs (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 389 118)

Nelson, C. M., & Rutherford, R. B. (1988). Behavioral interventions with behaviorally disordered students. In M. C. Wang, M. C. Reynolds, & H. J. Walberg (Eds), Handbook of special education: Research and practice (pp. 125-153). New York: Pergammon Press.

Newby, R. F., Fischer, M., & Roman, M. A. (1991). Parent training for families of children with ADHD. School Psychology Review, 20 (2), 252-265.

Rhode, G., Jenson, W. R., & Reavis, H. K. (1995). The tough kids book. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.

Rodgers, A. Y. (1992). Acceptability of time out procedures for schoolage children: Evaluations by direct care staff and students in child development and child care. Child & Youth Care Forum, 21 (3), 195-208.

Skiba, R., & Raison, J. (1990). Relationship between the use of timeout and academic achievement. Exceptional Children, 57 (1), 36-46.

Smith, D. D., & Rivera, D. M. (1993). Effective discipline (2nd ed.). Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Twyman, J. S., Johnson, H., Buie, J. D., & Nelson, C. M. (1994). The use of a warning procedure to signal a more intrusive timeout contingency. Behavioral Disorders, 19 (4), 243-253.

Veenstra, G. J., & Scott, C. G. (1993). A model for using time out as an intervention technique with families. Journal of Family Violence, 8 (1), 71-87.

Wielkiewicz, R. M. (1995). Behavior management in the schools: Principles and procedures. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (1995). A programming guide for emotional disturbance (Bulletin No. 94324). Milwaukee: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Yell, M. L. (1994). Timeout and students with behavior disorders: A legal analysis. Education and Treatment of Children, 17 (3), 293-301.

APPENDIX A

Intervention Ladder

INTERVENTION LADDER

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX B

Time Out Report

TIME OUT REPORT

Student _____ Date _____

Time _____

Description of Incident:

Did Behavior Endanger the Safety of the Student or Others or Disrupt the Learning Environment? If so, How?

Intervention(s) Used:

_____ Verbal Direction
_____ Warning
_____ Contingent Observation
_____ Exclusion Time Out
_____ Isolation/Seclusion Time Out
_____ Other (Describe)

PARENT(S) NOTIFIED?
Yes _____ No _____

Length of Time Out _____ Results of Time Out/Remarks:

Signature of Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Witness: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Administrator/Supervisor _____ Date: _____